THE USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

THE INSTITUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

The International Working-Class Movement

PROBLEMS
OF HISTORY
AND THEORY

In seven volumes

Introduction by Academician
B.N. PONOMAREV

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS

The International Working-Class Movement

PROBLEMS
OF HISTORY
AND THEORY

Volume I

THE ORIGINS OF THE PROLETARIAT AND ITS EVOLUTION AS A REVOLUTIONARY CLASS

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS MOSCOW

Translated from the Russian by *Yuri Shirokov* and *Campbell Creighton*
Designed by *V. V. Yeryomin*

Международное рабочее движение

Вопросы истории и теории

В СЕМИ ТОМАХ

Том первый:

ВОЗНИКНОВЕНИЕ ПРОЛЕТАРИАТА
И ЕГО СТАНОВЛЕНИЕ КАК РЕВОЛЮЦИОННОГО КЛАССА

На английском языке

The General Editorial Committee:
B. N. Ponomarev, Chairman, T. T. Timofeyev, Deputy Chairman, A. I. Sobolev, Deputy Chairman, O. T. Bogomolov, A. S. Chernyayev, G. G. Diligensky, P. N. Fedoseyev, B. G. Gafurov, A. A. Galkin, Y. M. Garushyants, S. S. Khromov, A. L. Narochnitsky, A. P. Poryvayev, S. S. Salychev, A. N. Shlepakov, Y. B. Shmeral, M. I. Sladkovsky, V. G. Solodovnikov, V. V. Volsky, V. V. Zagladin, E. M. Zhukov

© Издательство „Мысль“, 1976

English translation © Progress Publishers 1980

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

М $\frac{10303—233}{016(01)—80}$ 40—80

0901000000

74-4720

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
9

VOLUME ONE.
THE EMERGENCE OF THE PROLETARIAT
AND ITS EVOLUTION AS A REVOLUTIONARY CLASS
37

Part One.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROLETARIAT INTO
AN INDEPENDENT SOCIAL FORCE
39

Chapter 1.
The Origins of the Proletariat. The Initial Stage of Its Evolution and Labour Struggle
41

The Origination of the System of Wage Labour
42

The Characteristics of the Emerging Proletariat
59

The Condition of the Proletariat
72

Labour Struggle Against Exploitation
85

Labour Participation in the Anti-Feudal Movements
94

The Workers' Role in the Early Bourgeois Revolutions
101

Chapter 2.
The Formation of the Industrial Proletariat. The Working Class in the Early Stages of the Industrial Revolution
120

The General Features and Patterns of Formation
120

The Distinctions of the Formative Process in Individual Countries
140

Chapter 3.
Unification and Organisation into a Class
175

The Socio-Economic Position of the Working Class in Conditions of the Developing Industrial Revolution
175

The Economic Struggle
190

First Labour Organisations. The Origination of Trade Unions
218

Chapter 4.

The Forerunners of Scientific Socialism. Utopian Socialism in the Earlier Half of the Nineteenth Century
239

The Early Socialist and Communist Utopias
239

English Utopian Socialism
243

French Utopian Socialism
257

Dissemination of Ideas of Utopian Socialism in Russia
271

Utopian Socialism in the United States
279

Utopian Socialism and the Development of the Labour Movement
281

Chapter 5.

The Emergence of the Politically Independent Working-Class Movement
291

The Practices of the Struggle for Political Independence
291

Labour Revolts in France. The Proletarians and the Republicans
293

The League of the Just. Independent Actions of the German Workers
304

Chartism—the First Mass Proletarian Revolutionary Movement
311

The Struggle of the Proletariat in the United States
324

The Social Consciousness of Proletariat in the Pre-Marxian Period
329

The Doctrines of the Utopian Communists
329
The Views of Revolutionary Chartism
347

Part Two.
THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT AND THE FOUNDING OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM
361

Chapter 6.
The Emergence of Marxism. The Birth of the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat
363

The Greatest Revolution in Science
363
The Theory of Scientific Communism in the Making
366
The Communist League
382
The Manifesto of the Communist Party
395

Chapter 7.
The Working Class in the European Revolutions of 1848-1849
406
The Confrontation Between the Proletariat and the Bourgeoisie in France
408
The Workers on the Road to Rebellion After the February Revolution
408
The June Uprising of the Parisian Workers
434
The Struggle Against Absolutism and Reaction, for Democracy
452
The Proletariat and the Revolutionary Outbreak in Germany
452
The Programme, Strategy and Tactics of Marx and Engels in the Revolution. The Activities of the Communist League
463
The Workers' Resistance to a Counter-Revolutionary Offensive. Rearguard Battles
470
The Working Class and the Revolution in the Austrian Empire
480

England in 1848: the Last Upsurge of the Mass Chartist Movement
492

Chapter 8.
The Development of Marxism in the 1850s and Early 1860s
498

The Analysis by Marx and Engels of the Experience of the Revolutions of 1848-1849. Further Development of the Theory of Scientific Communism
498

The Economic Theory of Marx and the Working Class
515

Chapter 9.
The New Upsurge of the Working-Class Movement and Formation of the First International
534

Marx and Engels Fight to Establish the Principles of Proletarian Internationalism
534

The Prerequisites of International Unity of the Proletariat
536

The Founding and Constituting of the International Working Men's Association
550

Emergence of a Mass Organisation of the Workers
559

International Solidarity in Practice. Development of a Programme of Proletarian Action
581

Consolidation of the National Sections of the Working-Class Movement
596

The European Powers' Foreign Policy and the International Proletariat
600

The Proletariat and the Emancipation Struggle of Oppressed Peoples
612

Chapter 10.
The Ideological Struggle Around the Proletariat's Historical Role
618

Chapter 11.
Conclusion
640

Some Results of the Working-Class Struggle in the First Stages of Its Development
640

Name Index
667

INTRODUCTION

The international revolutionary movement of the working class has a long, heroic and complex history—from the early battles against the exploiters to its conversion into the most powerful social force exerting a growing influence on world development in favour of peace and socialism, national and social emancipation.

Marxist-Leninist theoreticians have invariably paid close attention to a profound and comprehensive study and generalisation of the historical experience gained by the proletariat in the course of its class struggle. The founders of scientific communism said that without "understanding the necessary historical connection and, thereby, the possible course of developments no successful party policy is possible".[1] Marxism-Leninism proceeds from the need for research into the whole wealth of international experience of proletarian struggle and for securing a situation in which class-conscious workers could "have an *understanding of the significance* of their movement and a *thorough knowledge* of it".[2] This is precisely what the production of generalising work on the history of the world working-class movement is called upon to facilitate.

Marxist scientific thought has done very much for the objective study of the experience of proletarian struggle. Marx, Engels, Lenin have produced unsurpassed specimens of a comprehensive historical analysis. There are successes in the study of the labour movement in individual countries, the history of socialist thought and the development of scientific communism, the history of international labour organisations, etc.

Nevertheless, the demand for works summing up the international experience of revolutionary labour struggle at its different stages—

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1967, Bd. 35, S. 366.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "The Working Class and Its Press", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 363.

works interpreting the past in the interest of the present and future, has not been satisfied and continues to grow. Such a generalising work can rely today only on numerous concrete studies based on Marxist-Leninist methodology. The documentary basis for presenting the history of the international working-class movement has widened substantially. The creative development of the Marxist-Leninist teaching by the CPSU and the fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties affords new possibilities to the modern researcher. Also of major importance is the fact that over the last few decades the international working-class movement has gained valuable new experience making possible a comprehensive assessment of the past phenomena and processes.

This is what largely predetermined the main tasks facing the team of the authors of the present multi-volume edition. It is a question of presenting an adequately complete picture of the socio-economic, ideological and political development of the working class, its maturing as the leading force in the revolutionary remaking of society. This must not be simply an exposition of the history of "civil society" with a certain emphasis on the role and activities of the working class. Such an approach would lead to a repetition in principle of what has already been published in the form of works on modern and recent history. The authors intended to present against the background of society's general progress a coherent description of events and problems directly related to the evolution of the working class, to show by citing concrete material its growing role as a factor ensuring mankind's social progress.

As Lenin pointed out, Marx's method consists in establishing, "in the first place, the movement of *which* class is the mainspring of the progress possible in those concrete conditions".[1] It is perfectly obvious how important this general methodological principle is for the study of the evolution of the class whose transforming-constructive activities are crucial to mankind's deliverance from war, poverty, exploitation, and oppression, the realisation of socialist ideals.

On the basis of the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the leading social role of the proletariat the working-class movement is considered as a totality of all forms of working-class activity in implementing its world historic mission. Viewed from this angle, the working-class movement originated at the same time as the working class itself.

The international working-class movement naturally implies the existence of at least a few national working-class movements, but it is not simply their sum total. Uniting the national movements, it

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Under a False Flag", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p. 143.

reflects at the same time the common content of the class struggle, which constitutes the international essence of the working class.

This interpretation of the subject of research makes possible a more clear-cut definition of the place of the international working-class movement in the common historical process. Its history is considered as part of general social history. Accordingly, social history stands out as the milieu of the history of the international working-class movement, since the working class exists, develops and struggles in a definite society, in a definite country.

The authors of this generalising work on such an important subject deem it their duty to observe as consistently as possible Lenin's idea that a historical phenomenon can be understood correctly and completely only if it is examined from the angle of its origin and its main developmental stages, so as to clear up what it has come to be from the angle of this evolution.[1]

This idea underlies the structure of this edition, as well as the division of working-class history into periods.

The edition opens with a volume covering a long historical period. The wide chronological limits of the volume are motivated by the exposition of working-class history beginning with the emergence of the proletariat. In this respect the authors have been guided by the instructions of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, who considered the proletariat as a historical category, which came into being along with the emergence of the capitalist mode of production and dates back to the time when the feudal system was on the whole still predominant.

The study of the history of the proletariat in its early stages, including the epoch "when modern bourgeois society was in its infancy",[2] is a prerequisite for an in-depth analysis of its later development. While being a matter of independent scientific interest, this study is at the same time of fairly great importance for a correct understanding of the proletariat's further history. The growth of the proletariat in the world widely differed from region to region. A phase passed in one European country in the 16th to the first half of the 18th century might have dragged out in another for a variety of reasons, and in certain countries was belated by one hundred years or more. In that situation the specific distinctions of the early formative stages of the proletariat continued to influence the general development of the international working-class movement not only throughout the 19th but also in the 20th century.

---

[1] See V. I. Lenin, "The State", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 473.

[2] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970, p. 157.

In the first volume an attempt has been made to reveal on the basis of concrete historical material the fundamental laws and major characteristics of the evolution of the international working-class movement.

Describing the formation of the working class, the authors focussed their attention on the most typical methods of proletarian struggle in that period. Upholding their vital interests and resisting the capitalists, the proletarians set up their first trade associations. The experience of their activities was a primary school of its own kind, in which the proletarians learned to identify their class enemy—the bourgeoisie—and became increasingly aware of the need for a systematic and organised struggle against it. The proletarians, who constituted an important and the most restive section of the indigent urban lower classes, took an active part in anti-feudal movements: the French bourgeois revolution of the late 18th century, the War of Independence of the American colonies, the Pugachev peasant uprising in Russia, etc.

At the next stage, when the process of the formation of the industrial proletariat, i.e., the core of the working class, was completed in England and took a rapid course in some other countries, the working-class struggle advanced to a new, higher plane. This was the maturing of the proletariat as a *politically independent* force, aware more or less clearly of the cardinal contradiction between its interests and those of the bourgeoisie. This was evidenced by such outstanding events of the class struggle in the thirties and forties as the Chartist movement in England, the Lyons uprisings of 1831 and 1834 in France, the Silesian weavers' uprising of 1844 in Germany.

At that time capitalism was as yet in the stage of ascent. The working class, which more and more clearly manifested itself as an independent political force, continued to take an active part in the general democratic movement. It fought energetically against the enemies of its enemies—be it the feudal aristocracy or the élite of the bourgeoisie itself (the financial aristocracy). In the course of this struggle the proletarians acquired political experience and became increasingly differentiated from the bourgeois part of the democratic strata of society.

One of the main tasks of the contributors to the first volume was to define the historic significance of the early politically independent actions of the working class as a fighter for its own emancipation, as well as for democratic progress.

The inception of the class awareness of the proletariat is among the fundamental problems of the rising and evolution of the international working-class movement. Hence the need to trace the path from the worker opposition to machine industry to the realisation of the responsibility of the capitalist system for the use of machines as an

instrument of exploitation, to describe the gradual transition from the naive and vague dreams of a society of "general equality and prosperity" to the origination of the scientific theory of struggle for socialism and communism. The most important part of this analysis is the history of the development of the Marxist teaching on the world historic mission of the working class, the enrichment of this teaching by Marx and Engels on the basis of the practical experience gained in the class battles, the propagation of Marxism within the proletarian masses. It was scientific communism that opened the way for the transition of the spontaneous labour movement to class consciousness.

The authors pay special attention to the culminations of the class struggle of the proletariat, its revolutionary actions where they reached their climax within the framework of bourgeois revolutions or, at definite moments, even extended beyond it, as was the case during the June uprising in Paris in 1848.

The rise and development of the class struggle of the proletariat as an international phenomenon is another important range of problems discussed in the volume. Concrete historical material is presented to show how the labour movement, which had begun as far back as the epoch of the disintegration of the feudal system, gradually became internationalised not only in theory but also in practice. For a long time the proletarians waged their class struggle within their national boundaries, since the economy of ascending capitalism developed mainly on the basis of national markets. For all that, the universal laws of the proletarian movement, which was increasingly active as a great united international force, became manifest at an early stage.[1]

The first volume covers the initial period of the history of the working class and the labour movement. From the viewpoint of the socio-economic evolution of the working class, the material on this period throws into relief the following main developmental stages: the pre-proletariat, the manufactory proletariat, the industrial proletariat. In many countries, and even on whole continents, the proletariat had not passed these stages until the 20th century, and, accordingly, its concrete history is expounded in the subsequent volumes.

These, just as other Marxist-Leninist criteria of the dynamics of the development of the working class and the labour movement to be discussed below, make the basis for the edition as a whole. They are present to a varying degree in all of its volumes.

The development of the working class in the process of its conversion from a "class in itself" into a "class for itself" is examined, for

[1] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1963, Bd. 22, S. 515.

instance, in the following stages: (1) a passive, exploited mass; (2) the proletariat as a growing factor in economic and social struggle; (3) the working class as a conscious social force, the vanguard contingent of the working people and an active fighter for mankind's general emancipation from exploitation, national and social oppression.

The stages in the evolution of the working-class movement are also determined by the level of organisation, the ways and means of struggle: the initial forms of social protest, the beginning of organised struggle, the combination of economic and political struggle and understanding of the ultimate goals of the movement, the constructive activities of the working class as the leading force of society on a national and international scale.

Having passed the stage of influence of Utopian socialist theories, the ideological development of the working class subsequently reached a qualitatively new level characterised by the emergence and spread of Marxism and then by the advent of the Leninist stage in the development of scientific communism and the working-class movement as a whole.

At the same time, no chronology of working-class history is possible without the background of events of general historic significance, particularly those which, by reason of their wide scale and comprehensive scope, incorporate, as it were, all of the aforesaid chronological criteria, marking out thereby the turning-points of history. Among them are the greatest social revolutions of the modern times and their consequences. One of such turning points of crucial importance for the international working-class movement was the *industrial revolution*. It had a direct bearing on the final formation of that social group in capitalist society which Marx and Engels described as the modern proletariat.[1] It was precisely in that period that the working class took its first action against the bourgeoisie as a class and Marxism came into being as a scientific proletarian ideology. The industrial revolution, however, ran an irregular course, and its period widely varied from country to country between the late 18th and the latter half of the 19th century.

Another turning-point which ushered in the next period was in the early 1870s. It was opened by the *Paris Commune* of 1871, a milestone event in the history of the world proletariat, when, as Marx put it, "with the struggle in Paris the struggle of the working class against the capitalist class and its state has entered upon a

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, p. 175.

new phase".[1] That period had lasted until the early years of the 20th century, when capitalism finally developed into a new, imperialist stage. During those thirty-odd years the working-class movement made substantial progress. Its influence and scale increased, and it advanced by far organisationally and ideologically. In the most developed capitalist countries the working-class movement experienced "a phase of 'peaceful' preparations for the changes to come".[2] The period of formation and growth of mass socialist parties is characterised, to quote Lenin, "by the tremendous spread of socialism, the unprecedented growth of all kinds of organisations of the proletariat, and the all-round preparation of the proletariat in the most varied fields for the fulfilment of its great historic mission."[3]

At the same time, the late 19th and the early 20th century saw a wide spread of opportunism in the form of Bernstein's revision of Marxism and the practices of English reformism. That phenomenon was attributable to the transition of capitalism to its imperialist stage and the new economic opportunities available to the bourgeoisie as a result of the exploitation of the colonies. The colonial superprofits became a source for feeding up a part of the working class and cultivating a worker élite, "the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class",[4] as Lenin called them. On that basis the ruling class finally developed its new tactics of systematic efforts to split the ranks of the proletariat and indoctrinate part of it with bourgeois ideology. While making full use, as before, of the machinery of coercion against the proletariat, the bourgeoisie, particularly in the imperialist period, more and more often resorts to such methods. Speaking at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969, Leonid Brezhnev said in this context: "In an effort to reinforce their social hinterland areas, the capitalists combine methods of suppression with partial satisfaction of the working people's demands—a method which Lenin said was one of 'concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential' (V. I. Lenin, "Tasks of Proletariat in Our Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 64), sowing the illusion that the working class can achieve its aspirations through agreements with

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 248.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968, p. 583.

[3] V. I. Lenin, "August Bebel", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 296.

[4] V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 194.

the employers, without a revolutionary transformation of society, within the framework of the capitalist system.[1]

The transition to imperialism, however, completed the period of the relatively "peaceful" development of the international working-class movement. In Russia, to where its focus had shifted, a pre-revolutionary situation took shape at the turn of the century. The Leninist stage in the working-class movement began in the mid-nineties. The emergence of Bolshevism as a trend of political thought and a political party was the greatest event in the history of the international working-class movement. It marked a radical turn from the traditional Social-Democratic parties to the proletarian party of a new type.

Thus, two currents finally developed in the international working-class movement at the turn of the century: the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist, and the reformist, opportunist one. The former opened up the prospect of world historic victories of the working class, which it won in the 20th century. The latter became a permanent inhibiting factor in the development of the working-class movement and repeatedly led it, as well as whole states and peoples, to severe defeats.

The *Russian Revolution of 1905-1907* was an important landmark in world history, as well as the world revolutionary process. That was the first popular revolution in the imperialist epoch. It advanced Russia's proletariat to the vanguard of the revolutionary movement, demonstrating the country's immense revolutionary democratic potential and the maturity of its working-class movement. The working class wrested leadership of the masses from the hands of the bourgeoisie and came forward as the leader and hegemon in a bourgeois-democratic revolution for the first time in history. This proved the ability of the proletariat to lead a revolution even in a country where it constituted the minority of the population. Having demonstrated the ability of the democratic peasant masses to help the proletariat to take over power, the revolution clearly revealed the counter-revolutionary character of the bourgeoisie.

New methods and forms of mass struggle were proposed and tested in the course of the revolution. A massive political strike growing into an armed uprising was used in practice. The rudimentary form of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry came into being in the form of Soviets of workers' deputies.

For the first time in the history of revolutions a Marxist party of the working class came out as an independent political force with its own programme, strategy and tactics. Two political lines—the

[1] *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969*, Prague, 1969, p. 149.

revolutionary, proletarian line upheld by the Bolsheviks and the reformist, opportunist line of the Mensheviks had to face a historical test in the crucible of revolutionary battles. This historical test demonstrated with full clarity the untenability of the reformist path and its formidable danger to the working class.

The practices of the revolutionary movement contributed to the continued enrichment of the Marxist theory of revolution, which was profoundly developed in Lenin's works.

The revolution of 1905-1907 was of great international significance. By giving an impetus to the working-class struggle in the capitalist countries of the West, it stimulated at the same time an upsurge of the national liberation movement in Asia, the involvement of hundreds of millions of working people in the East in the world revolutionary process, and opened up the prospect of unification of the working-class and the national liberation movements for a joint struggle against imperialism.

The years following the revolution saw a further widening and deepening of the working-class movement, as well as an exacerbation of the struggle between its revolutionary and reformist currents. The struggle against the danger of a world war assumed a growing importance for the working-class movement. That danger was aggravated by the entry of capitalism into the imperialist phase, which was characterised by a sharply increased unevenness of development in both the economic and political fields. The world had already been carved up by the biggest imperialist powers. A disturbance of the balance between them generated a striving for a re-division of the world, which could be effected only at the expense of some state, i.e., through war. Preparing for a struggle for a re-division of the world, the imperialists expected to use war also for suppressing the increased proletarian and national liberation movement. They hoped to poison the international proletariat with the venom of chauvinism, to undermine its unity, to exterminate physically a considerable proportion of the progressive workers and thereby to weaken the revolutionary onslaught of the masses.

The revolutionary wing in the international working-class movement persistently called public attention to the increased danger of war and sought to mobilise the efforts of the working class to avert it. Under the influence of this wing the Stuttgart (1907) and Basel (1912) congresses of the Second International adopted resolutions urging the workers on behalf of all socialist parties to fight against the outbreak of war or for the cessation of the war already begun and, what was most important, for using the crisis created by the war to overthrow capitalism. However, the increased influence of opportunism in most workers' parties at the time prevented the power of the working-class movement being used to avert a conflict between im-

perialist states. The First World War broke out in 1914. During four years armies of millions of officers and men engaged in reciprocal destruction to satisfy the predatory ambitions of the capitalist monopolies. A few score million people were killed or maimed, and whole states were doomed to famine and ruin. The war clearly exposed the true face of imperialism as the greatest source of disasters for the peoples. The opportunist majority of the parties of the Second International supported their national imperialist bourgeoisie in the war. They assumed thereby political responsibility for the holocaust into which mankind had been hurled by the imperialists. The Second International broke up into hostile political parties, demonstrating the disastrous consequences of opportunism and reformism.

Only the revolutionary section of the labour movement remained loyal to its internationalist principles. In Russia, Lenin's Bolshevik Party came forward with a strong denunciation of the imperialist war, the policy of "one's own" government and called for ending the war by revolutionary means. The internationalist position was taken up by the Bulgarian party of the "Tesnyaki", the Serbian Social-Democrats and Left-wing groups in some other parties (German, Italian, etc.). It was precisely the activities of the revolutionary internationalists that laid the groundwork for the later revival of the international labour movement, but now on a new basis, purged of reformism and opportunism.

The *Great October Socialist Revolution*, which ushered in the era of the triumphs of socialism and communism, was a crucial turning-point in the international labour movement. This revolution radically changed the course of world history and gave a new trend to world development. It breached the front of imperialism and put an end to its undivided supremacy.

In the history of mankind that was the first revolution to grant the working class and nations not only formal political rights but also the material conditions required to enjoy them. In a vast territory, on the ruins of one of the largest imperialist states, it established a working people's state, which abolished the exploitation of man by man. The revolution showed the practical way out of the imperialist war. One of the first legislative acts of the new revolutionary government was Lenin's Decree on Peace, which appealed to the peoples and governments of all countries to end the senseless and criminal bloodshed. New principles of international relations were proclaimed and then put into practice.

The revolution showed all nations, the dependent and oppressed peoples in the first place, the right way of solving the national question.

The world historic consequences of the October Revolution con-

clusively demonstrated the universal character of Lenin's theory of socialist revolution, the immense significance of its experience and lessons for all nations. The revolution became a rich source of new ideas for the continued enrichment of Marxist-Leninist theory. The theory and practice of socialist revolution in the USSR assumed tremendous significance for the international proletariat.

The victory of the socialist revolution in Russia confirmed the force of attraction of Marxist-Leninist ideas, the correctness of the Bolshevik Party's strategy and tactics, facilitating thereby the struggle for democracy, socialism and peace by the working people in all countries.

The exploited and oppressed masses throughout the world were stirred to action by the direct influence of the October Revolution, in conditions of a sharp exacerbation of the contradictions of the capitalist system. A year after it, in November 1918, the absolutist Kaiser regime in Germany was overthrown by a bourgeois-democratic revolution. The tide of revolution swept away the Habsburg monarchy in Austria-Hungary. The Austrian, Hungarian and Czechoslovak republics emerged from the ruins of that Empire. An independent Polish state came into being in Eastern Europe. The revolutionary movement enveloped Serbia and other Southern Slav regions, Bulgaria and Rumania. The West European countries—France, Italy, Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark, and others—were swept by a wave of strikes and massive anti-government demonstrations and meetings. Engels' prediction, who had written prophetically in the 19th century that crowns would litter the streets by the dozens, came true in the literal sense.[1]

In that situation of a powerful revolutionary upsurge Communist parties were founded in a number of countries. In 1919 the Communist International was set up, which was called upon to accelerate the formation of revolutionary parties, thereby giving the labour movement the ultimate weapon for victory over capitalism.

The victory of the working people in Russia gave powerful impetus to the national liberation movement. The peoples of the colonial and dependent countries rose with renewed enthusiasm to a struggle against colonial oppression.

The next period in the history of the international labour movement was ushered in by the *rout of the fascist Axis powers in the Second World War* (1939-1945). That was the most sanguinary war in human history. Its impact on all spheres of social life was without precedent. The future of all nations and countries was at stake in that gigantic battle. There lies the world historic significance of

[1] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1962, Bd. 21, S. 351.

victory over fascism. The Soviet Army and the people were the decisive force that put to rout fascism and Japanese militarism. The significance of this fact transcended by far the limits of its time. The Soviet-German front was the scene of confrontation not only between two armies but also between two antagonistic social systems: a confrontation of fundamentally opposite economic and political principles, incompatible cultures and ideologies. The defeat of Hitler Germany, imperialist Japan and their allies met the interests of all progressive mankind, of democracy and socialism.

The victory over fascism paved the road for a long series of victorious popular revolutions, which toppled the capitalist system in another eleven countries of Europe and Asia, and then in Cuba. This development ranks next in importance to the October Revolution in world history: socialism stepped out of the limits of one country to become a world system. This confirmed Lenin's prevision of another ineluctable severe defeat of imperialism in the event of war, which would inevitably lead to an "extension of socialism".[1]

The Soviet Union's power and prestige made it possible to accomplish the formidable historic task of preventing a situation where the takeover of government by the working class, the working people would be followed by imperialist armed intervention and a bloody civil war, as had been the case in Soviet Russia when it was alone. It was easier to overcome the difficulties of the transitional period from capitalism to socialism, relying on the political support and assistance of loyal and dependable friends.

The positions of world capitalism were greatly undermined. In Europe, it came out of the war, shaken down to its deepest roots. The instability of all its foundations—from the economic to the ideological—was a typical phenomenon in most countries of not only Eastern but also Western Europe. The unity of the popular, democratic forces had been forged in the course of the anti-fascist struggle in the ranks of the Resistance, in which socialist and other patriotic organisations had fought side by side with the Communists. The Communist parties had proved to be the most selfless and consistent fighters against the fascist invaders and their collaborators. The international communist movement came forward as a close-knit and high-principled force opening up for all nations the prospect of deliverance from exploitation, national and social oppression, the prospect of genuine peace and socialism. In the early postwar years,

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 56; V. I. Lenin, "Session of C.E.C., Moscow Soviet and Trade Unions", *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 423.

the working people in a number of capitalist countries succeeded in making such socio-political gains which they had been unable to achieve during the long decades of earlier stubborn class battles.

Containing and diverting against itself the main forces of imperialism, the socialist system undermined its ability to keep foreign peoples in subjection. They were facing an enemy who could now be forced to retreat. A powerful tide of the national liberation movement surged in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The world colonial system began to disintegrate. This process resulted in the appearance of more than eighty newly independent states on the world map. Many of them have by now made substantial progress along the path of social transformations. That was the birth of a new force, which—in alliance with world socialism—has enormous anti-imperialist potentials.

In today's situation where existing socialism has become a decisive factor of modern history, the world labour movement has every reason to sum up the results achieved by the two main contingents which took shape at one time in the organised labour movement, and to establish who is right in the historic dispute between the Marxists-Leninists and the social-reformists.

What could its reformist opponents oppose to the victories of existing socialism?

Social-reformism as an ideological current is usually characterised by the following features:

—denial of the necessity of a proletarian revolution for transition from capitalism to socialism, acceptance of exclusively evolutionary forms of social progress, which leads in fact to reconciliation with capitalism;

—admiration for bourgeois democracy and elevation of parliamentary activity to an absolute;

—a negative attitude to the idea of the historic mission of the working class as the leader of all working people in building a socialist society, rejection of the Marxist-Leninist thesis on the dictatorship of the proletariat as the sine qua non of success in the struggle for remaking society on socialist principles;

—substitution of the slogan of class collaboration for the idea of the class struggle, reliance on a coalition with the ruling quarters of the bourgeoisie, and on reforms within the framework of the capitalist system;

—departure from scientific socialism and adherence to various bourgeois economic, political and philosophical theories;

—denial of the international significance of Leninism as a new stage in the development of the theory and practice of proletarian revolution.

The content of reformist ideology conclusively proves the Marxist thesis to the effect that in accordance with the existence of the two main classes of capitalist society two ideologies—bourgeois and socialist—emerge within it. A decline of one of them leads to elevation of the other. As Lenin put it, "the only choice is—either bourgeois or socialist ideology".[1]

After the collapse of the Second International the main watershed between the revolutionary and the reformist trend in the labour movement was the attitude to a socialist revolution, and after October 1917, more specifically, the attitude to the October Socialist Revolution. The leading social-reformist theoreticians alleged that Russia as an economically backward country had not yet matured for a socialist revolution. After the revolution did take place they took an active stand against it, incessantly predicted its doom, gloating over the difficulties in the formation of a new society.

Ignoring all sombre prophecies, the Bolshevik Party, the working class of Russia led by Lenin practically got down to the work of socialist construction. Defying the unfavourable conditions in which it had to be done (the underdeveloped economy, the devastating ravages of the long years of the imperialist and the civil war, the hostile capitalist encirclement), searching in a spirit of creativity for new ways and means of coping with the constructive tasks of the revolution, they set a practical example of solving the "perennial" problems of transition to socialism, which were and remain a stumbling-block for reformism. Under the leadership of the CPSU a socialist society was built within a brief historical period.

In a number of capitalist countries Social-Democratic, reformist parties were in power for a long time, in certain cases for decades. During this time the working class by its stubborn struggle forced the bourgeoisie to make certain concessions. This was facilitated decisively by the achievements of existing socialism, which had shown an example of real solution to modern social and political problems.

The reformists usually credit themselves with a certain improvement in the living conditions of the working class in the industrialised capitalist countries. Even they, however, admit that nothing has been achieved in the fundamental questions of remaking society. Having opposed the revolutionary wing of the labour movement, they promised many times and for many decades to achieve socialism without cataclysms and difficulties, without the class struggle. These promises have not been fulfilled. In the final analysis, in no country have the reformist parties been able to "replace" capitalism

[1] V. I. Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 384.

with socialism. In fact, in most cases they made only half-hearted efforts to this end.

Under governments formed by the Social-Democrats monopoly capital usually retains its positions. In some countries the Social-Democrats and bourgeois parties joined in government coalitions. Of course, such cabinets are preferable to reactionary, let alone frankly fascist regimes. However, the activities of the reformists keep within the limits of bourgeois society. Everywhere they are bound hand and foot by the actual domination of the bourgeoisie.

Opposing the revolutionary path of the development of the labour movement, the reformist theoreticians accused and are accusing the Marxists-Leninists of renunciation of and contempt for democracy. They extoll some non-class democracy in opposition to the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat. History, however, has settled this dispute in favour of the proletarian revolutionaries.

One of the characteristics of imperialism, Lenin pointed out, is "political reaction *all along* the line..."[1] Preservation of the capitalist relations, therefore, is fraught with the constant danger of the most reactionary quarters of the ruling bourgeoisie resorting to brutal, terrorist means of suppression. The only effective factor in offsetting this danger is counteraction by the popular masses, the working class first and foremost. Preserving the foundations of monopoly capitalism, the reformists contribute thereby to the continuation of this danger. Ignoring it, blindly reposing their hopes in the parliamentary "rules of the game", resisting unity of action of the working class, the reformist parties weakened it in the face of an offensive by the rightist forces. This was the case, for instance, in Germany in the period after the First World War, where the repeated stay of Social-Democracy in power (for more than ten years in all) was followed by the rapid sliding of the political situation to the right, culminating in the government takeover by the Nazi party. This was made possible to no small extent by the myopic position of the then leaders of German Social-Democracy, who had concentrated their efforts on the struggle against the Communist Party and shut their eyes to the actual, mortal danger from the right. All this ended eventually in a tragic disaster for the German working class, all working people, and caused severe losses not only to the communist but also the social-democratic movement. The Nazi takeover of power in Germany led to the Second World War, in which scores of millions of people died.

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p. 106.

What have the practices of the dictatorship of the proletariat shown?

In the USSR it became a means of building a socialist society. Truly socialist democracy—democracy for the majority—triumphed in the country. In the Soviet Union and other socialist countries social and political inequality was uprooted: the exploitation of man by man was abolished, and the means of production were made the property of the whole society. The development of democracy in the Soviet Union resulted in a situation where "the state, which arose as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has, in the new, contemporary stage, become a state of the entire people, an organ expressing the interests and will of the people as a whole".[1]

It was only because a powerful socialist state existed in the world that the European nations were delivered from the yoke of the fascist invaders, and avoided total plunder and physical extermination. In other words, it was precisely the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat that saved the freedoms and gains of the working people on a worldwide scale. In this question, too, historical truth was on the side of the Communists.

The international labour movement has also repeatedly dealt with various *left opportunist trends.*

The outward radicalism and "revolutionism" of the positions upheld by the "left" opportunists in the past and today reflect the confusion and disorientation of numerous intermediate social groups in capitalist society, which are extremely resentful of the conditions of their existence but are not yet prepared to assimilate the ideas and principles of proletarian, scientific socialism.

"Left" opportunism has always been characterised by the following features:

—proclivity to ostentatious slogans with utter contempt for day-to-day work to lay the groundwork for revolutionary transformations;

—adventurism based on unwillingness to reckon with the objective situation: the degree of progression towards a revolutionary crisis, the alignment of political forces, the sentiments of the masses, and the degree of their readiness for determined action;

—social orientation on the petty-bourgeois strata and the lumpen-proletariat;

—a hostile or nihilistic attitude to the main, politically active mass of the working class having the experience of economic and social struggle;

---

[1] *The Road to Communism*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1962, p. 547.

—efforts to oppose the mental and the manual workers to one another, appealing now to the workers against the intelligentsia, now to the intelligentsia against the workers.

Like reformism "left" opportunism is not simply fruitless but also very harmful to the working class and its movement. All attempts of the so-called "ultra-leftists" to put their ideas into practice have come to nothing. Reaction usually took advantage of their actions as a pretext for massive savage reprisals against the working class, its organisations and all democratic forces. Adventures of this kind more than once hurled the revolutionary movement backwards.

As the history of the working-class movement shows, there is a deep-seated link between right and "left" opportunism. Leftist deviations repeatedly came on the scene in the working-class movement as a reaction to the opportunistic "sins" of the Right-wing leaders of Social-Democracy. And conversely, in the final analysis leftist extremes invariably nourished the right opportunistic views, social-reformist sentiments and alienated part of the workers with their recklessness and adventurism.

That is not the only point, however. Although in the ideological and theoretical field the line of demarcation between the right opportunist and leftist conceptions is fairly clear, in the sphere of practical politics quite a few cases of direct links between them are known. Their most typical common platform is anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. This platform is the nutrient medium for hybrid conceptions which can in equal measure be attributed to the right and "left" varieties of opportunism.

A few highly *important continual problems* advanced by the actual progress of the working-class movement are traceable throughout its history.

One of them, which is indispensable for understanding the world historic role of the proletariat, is the *character and direction of its development*.

Already the earliest Marxist documents, primarily the *Communist Manifesto*, contain the major theses on the development of the proletariat. They also outline the principal characteristics of its development as the main, ascending social force in capitalist society.

First of all, the proletariat grows numerically. From a small section of society it transforms into an increasingly massive class. Eventually, as is shown by the example of the most developed countries, the proletariat embraces the majority of the gainfully employed population.

The internal structure of the proletariat changes along with its increase in numbers. At the same time, the industrial core of the

working class steadily grows in importance, because it is directly linked with the most developed, modern productive forces requiring an ever greater share of mental work.

The quantitative and qualitative changes are accompanied by organisational development. The histories of the political parties of the working class, the trade unions, the co-operatives, etc., are elements of the history of the international working-class movement.

Particularly important is the problem of the *vanguard role* of the Communist parties and the world communist movement in the working-class movement in individual countries and in the international working-class movement as a whole. The Communist Party is the most dynamic and single-minded section of the movement, its leading part equipped with a scientific theory. "The Party," Lenin said, "is the politically conscious, advanced section of the class, it is its vanguard. The strength of that vanguard is ten times, a hundred times, more than a hundred times, greater than its numbers."[1] He believed that the most difficult as well as the most important matter was "of converting the Party into the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat without permitting it to become divorced from the masses, but, on the contrary, by linking it more and more closely with them, infusing them with revolutionary consciousness and rousing them for the revolutionary struggle...".[2] Since the emergence of Communist parties it has never been possible to study the history of the working-class movement without a most careful and comprehensive analysis of the place and role of the Communists within it.

An important problem, traceable throughout the history of the international working-class movement, is to establish the *correlation between the national and the international in the class struggle of the proletariat.* Internationalism arose from the identity of the situation of the working class in different countries under capitalism; it reflects the objectives of the class struggle and the universal character of the laws governing the world revolutionary process. At the same time, the specific features of the class struggle in individual countries are deeply rooted in the national soil and are conditioned by the traditions of a given country, its distinctive history, national culture, and national character. A correct assessment of the actual interrelationship of the international and the national has always been

---

[1] V. I. Lenin, "How Vera Zasulich Demolishes Liquidationism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 406.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Notes of a Publicist", *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 209.

a prerequisite for the strength of the proletariat and success in its struggle.

International solidarity unites all the contingents of the working class. During its history, however, the position of the proletariat, the level of its organisation, the political and ideological forms of the working-class movement and its actual role were not identical in different countries and groups of countries. This, of course, also affects the forms in which the principles of proletarian internationalism are realised. For all the differences that exist and partly increase, the prevailing tendency is one of increasing interdependence and co-operation of workers on an international scale. The growing internationalisation of production, exchange and capital (of which the Common Market and multi-national monopolies are a specific expression under capitalism) imperatively demands defence of the interests of wage labour on a wider than national scale. The need for such unity of action on a class basis is increasingly urgent and tangible, while an awareness of this need spreads ever more widely and infiltrates even the reformist circles of the working-class movement. The involvement of ever greater strata of the masses in the capitalist countries in the struggle against aggression, militarisation, neo-colonialism, racism, neo-fascist reaction, monopoly integration and multi-national monopolies gives fresh impetus to the practical development of proletarian internationalism, opens up wider opportunities for further enhancement of the international role of the working class.

The study of the history of the working-class movement raises the *problem of the link between the emancipation of the working class itself, on the one hand, and its involvement in general civic development as the leading social force, as the hegemon class, on the other.* At different stages of the development of the working class and the labour movement, individual aspects of this process acquire different significance. Whereas at the time of the origination of international labour organisations the social, political, and ideological emancipation of the proletariat, or, as Lenin put it, its emergence from the general democratic mass had had a major role to play in its consolidation as the prime mover of social progress, the task that came to the foreground later was one of drawing closer to the wide sections of the non-proletarian population, of securing the actual hegemony of the proletariat in solving the cardinal social, national, and general humanitarian problems.

The economic and political demands of the working class reflect the interests of the mass of the people. It is also perfectly obvious that its determining participation (primarily that of the state-organised working class in the socialist countries) is absolutely indispen-

sable for the solution of such vital problems facing mankind as prevention of world thermonuclear war, abolition of the exploitation of man by man in whatever form, of poverty generated by it, eradication of famine and disease, as well as effective measures for environmental protection, rational utilisation of the Earth's resources, etc.

"Revolutions are the locomotives of history",[1] Marx said. Therefore, the *problem of revolution* is the pivotal question in the history of the international labour movement. It also has great practical significance. It is well known that the victory of the October Revolution was immensely facilitated by the fact that Lenin, the Bolsheviks had profoundly studied the historical experience of all past revolutions of any significance, knew in detail and took into account all generalisations, assessments and conclusions drawn from this experience by the founders of scientific communism—Marx and Engels.

The historical creativity of the working class, the experience of the international labour movement had supplied the background material on which Lenin evolved his theory of proletarian revolution, whose validity was confirmed repeatedly and is being confirmed by the practice of revolutionary struggle, the historic victories of socialism.

In the present conditions of worldwide transition from capitalism to socialism the problem of transitional forms merits attention. The question of transitional stages and transitional measures on the path to socialism was posed in his time by Marx. He allowed for "such a transitional situation" in which, "on the one hand, the modern economic basis of society has not yet taken shape, but on the other hand, the working masses are sufficiently strong to have such transition measures carried out which will in the final count help towards a radical change of society."[2]

Lenin thoroughly worked out this problem. He made a comprehensive analysis of the question of the development of a democratic into a socialist revolution, of the economic and political forms of transition to socialism, and advanced the idea of a revolutionary democratic state.

Relying on the ideas of the founders of Marxism-Leninism, the Communist parties draw up programmes of sweeping democratic reforms with due regard for the specific conditions in their respective countries and the present stage of world development in general. As stated in the Document of the International Meeting of Commu-

[1] Karl Marx, "The Class Struggle in France", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, p. 277.

[2] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1968, Bd. 16, S. 368-69.

nist and Workers' Parties, each party is completely independent in planning its policy, choosing the directions, forms and methods of struggle, this or that road to socialism in its own country, the forms and methods of its construction.[1]

The tasks of deep-going democratic transformations of the economic structure of society, the idea of establishing a state of a democratic union, a government of left front forces, anti-monopoly democracy—these and other programme principles advanced by the Communist parties today are called upon to play the role of intermediate and transitional forms where highly mature internal socio-economic and international prerequisites exist for a struggle for socialism.

The problem of *correlation of revolution and reform*, which is of exceptional importance from both the political and ideological points of view, is a component of the Marxist-Leninist theory of socialist revolution. The history of the international labour movement contains a wealth of material in this field as well.

Lenin described this correlation as follows: "The concept 'reform', is undoubtedly the opposite of the concept 'revolution'. Failure to remember this contrast, failure to remember the line that divides these two concepts, constantly leads to very serious mistakes in all historical discussions. But this contrast is not something absolute, this line is not something dead, but alive and changing, and one must be able to define it in each particular case."[2]

A revolution means the abolition of a given socio-economic system, the transition to a new quality. A reform is a change effected within the framework of the existing system; however, a reform may be a by-product of revolutionary struggle which has not culminated in final victory. On the other hand, reforms may lead to the conquest of definite positions by the labour movement, to an improvement of the situation of the working class and other working people, to a widening of democratic rights and freedoms. Under certain conditions reforms may be an important factor in preparing a revolution, mobilising the forces of the working class, the working people for a decisive advance. Everything depends on which class succeeds in turning the reforms to advantage.

The cardinal problems of the formation and ascension of the working class are the subject of an *acute ideological struggle, which is the main line of long ideological development.*

---

[1] See *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969*, p. 37.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Apropos of an Anniversary", *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968, pp. 115-16.

Of course, time incessantly makes corrections in the content and forms of ideological struggle. Some trends of thought and specific theories which at one time preoccupied their contemporaries have long been forgotten and are of interest only to students of the history of socio-political thought. Others were modified and adapted to new conditions. The principal class meaning of the struggle has remained unchanged. It reflects in a transfigured form the economic, social and political contradictions of antagonistic, capitalist society, and—on the international plane—the struggle between the two systems, the capitalist and the socialist.

The following three main directions may be traced in this struggle.

The *first direction* is the ideological struggle for goals and ideals. By evolving scientific socialism Marx and Engels put on a material basis the concepts of an ideal social order, which had formerly been of a Utopian character. Since its very inception the Marxist-Leninist world outlook has been characterised by a striving for the social and political organisation of society based on the abolition of all forms of the exploitation and oppression of man by man, all forms of social inequality.

The reactionary forces oppose to the social ideal of Marxism-Leninism a model of social order based on the idea of perpetual and allegedly irremovable inequality between men—economic, social, political, cultural, racial, national, etc.

In the time of Marx and Engels such ideas were advocated mostly by feudal ideologists. Later, when the bourgeoisie lost its progressive social functions, more and more apologists of the capitalist system adopted this platform. Advocates of chauvinism and racism, apologists of colonial conquest and enslavement of other peoples were guided by this platform. In the 20th century these ideas found the most extreme expression in the ideology of fascism. The rout of fascism "left a deep mark on the life of many peoples and changed the face of the world".[1] Even today, however, ideas of this sort loom large in the ideological arsenal of imperialism. They reflect the fear of the modern bourgeoisie in the face of imminent transformations, and sometimes the despair of the petty bourgeoisie the foundations of whose existence are undermined by the rapid development of state-monopoly capitalism.

The struggle against any such views has been and remains part and parcel of the struggle waged by the revolutionary working-class movement and its communist vanguard.

The *second direction* is the ideological struggle over the question

[1] L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 551.

of the leading social force in social development. Marx, Engels and Lenin substantiated and developed the teaching on the world historic mission of the working class. It is precisely the working class that is able, by virtue of its place in social production and in society in general, to rally behind itself the mass of the working people and achieve a radical, revolutionary abolition of the socio-economic system based on inequality and exploitation.

For more than a century this teaching has been opposed with schemes presenting various other social groups as the leading force in social development. The most primitive apologists of the capitalist system are still upholding the thesis on the progressive essence of the bourgeoisie as a "productive" and "organising" class. At the same time, they deliberately ignore the fact that modern bourgeois society looks more than ever before like "the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells", that the "conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them".[1] More sophisticated bourgeois ideologists "nominate" for the role of the leading social force the technically educated bureaucracy, the managers, etc.

In our day wide currency has been given to bourgeois and reformist-revisionist theories of the growing role of the so-called middle class. In this case the social criteria of class differentiation are simply substituted by technological ones. The "character of labour" is pronounced to be the main criterion of the social differentiation of society. On this basis the really existing middle strata in town and country are lumped together with a substantial proportion of the working class employed outside large-scale machine industry, as well as with the numerous and rapidly growing contingents of workers most closely linked with the processes characteristic of the scientific and technological revolution. This conglomeration of social groups is proclaimed to be some special "new" class.

Defence of the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the world historic mission of the working class implies a relentless struggle against such conceptions, which constitute a form of ideological justification of the capitalist system.

The *third direction* is the ideological struggle over the ways and means of implementing a revolution and social transformations in general. As it follows from historical experience, the application of incorrect, ineffective methods quite often is motivated by class interests and is a means of preventing or retarding actual

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 489, 490.

transformations. The insolvency of reformism and "left" opportunism attested to by history does not mean that their danger has been eliminated politically or that the need to oppose them has become less urgent. The differences in the positions of individual contingents of the proletariat, in the levels of their development, in the correlation of ideological influences, etc., objectively lay the groundwork for the existence within the working-class movement of *various trends reflecting both the past and the present of the working class.*

This is what determines the dual role of the political vanguard of the proletariat—the Marxist-Leninist parties. It implies an all-out effort to facilitate the ideological liberation of all contingents of the working class from alien influences and at the same time by overcoming ideological, political and organisational differences and disagreements, to mobilise the entire working class to a practical struggle for its rights and social progress.

The study of the historical experience of the international working-class movement is assuming special urgency today when new opportunities and prospects are opening up before the world working class, all revolutionary forces.

Over the last few years two interlinked processes have been characteristic of the world situation. This is, on the one hand, the consolidation of the forces of socialism, the socialist community of nations, which cannot be undermined by the subversive actions of the Maoist leadership of the PRC. Existing socialism has achieved spectacular socio-economic successes of world historic significance. Socialism today appears as an advanced civilisation opening up boundless opportunities for progress. This is, on the other hand, the growing struggle of the working class in the capitalist countries and other forms of the liberation movement in the entire non-socialist part of the world. Stimulating and supporting each other and often merging into a common torrent these two processes have led to substantial changes on the international scene in favour of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism, in the interest of the masses.

The new opportunities and prospects for radical social transformations are also connected with the changes in the international situation. In the stubborn struggle still being waged against the forces of militarism and reaction a turn has been achieved from the cold war to detente, to relations based on the principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. The successful completion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe was a milestone on this path. As regards its sources, its essence and its consequences detente is not only an international political but

also a socio-political phenomenon contributing to the development of social relations.

The ripeness of the objective factors lends special urgency to the question of the subjective prerequisites required to bring them into play: the scale and degree of formation of revolutionary, proletarian consciousness, the strength and influence of the political vanguard, its preparedness as the leading force of the working-class movement, all working masses.

Over the past few decades notable changes have taken place in this sphere as well. This is the effect of the long years of work in the working-class movement by the Marxist-Leninist parties consistently upholding the class interests of the working people; the vast experience in the class struggle against the domination of the capitalist monopolies gained over the period by the trade unions with the Communists being actively involved; the practical experience of the economic and political battles amassed by the working class in the course of strikes, demonstrations, and election campaigns; and the fact that the narrow-mindedness and hopelessness of reformist policies are increasingly obvious.

Faced with new tasks and new opportunities the communist vanguard of the working class pays keen attention to the further perfection of its ideological and theoretical arsenal:

—it consistently seeks guidance in the theory of scientific communism, which sums up the fundamental laws of social development;

—it demands a revolutionary policy to be pursued with due regard for the distinctions of a given period in the development of a given country;

—it learns tactical skills, all ways and means of the class struggle, develops an ability for quickly changing these ways and means, for regrouping its forces to fit the changing situation;

—it seeks to teach politics to the masses, referring to their own experience, to persuade them in practice of the need for radical transformations that would put an end to the rule of monopoly capital and the exploitive system;

—it seeks to formulate relevant slogans to rally around them all contingents of the working class, and other working people;

—its internationalist approach to the internal and international problems of its country educates the masses in an internationalist spirit and enhances their sentiments of proletarian solidarity;

—the Communists come out as the standard-bearers of peace, the

most consistent fighters against the war menace and the arms race.

At the present stage of the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress waged by the labour movement, first priority attaches to unification of all social and political forces opposed to imperialist reaction, the war menace, social and national oppression. During many decades the revolutionary wing of the labour movement has been stubbornly and consistently working for such unification on the basis of the unity of action of the working class. The idea of unity of the anti-imperialist democratic forces, a united labour front, was comprehensively substantiated by the 7th Congress of the Communist International in the thirties. It laid the groundwork for the practical programmes of the anti-fascist Popular Front which greatly contributed to the struggle of the peoples of some countries against reaction and fascism in the prewar years. The idea of unity of action of the working class and all democratic forces was put into effect in the ranks of the anti-fascist Resistance during the Second World War. The organisational unity of the working-class forces was the key factor in the victory of the people's democratic and socialist revolutions in the countries of Central and South-East Europe after the rout of fascism.

Achievement of working-class unity in the capitalist countries, as well as on an international scale largely depends on the mutual relations between the Communists and the Social-Democrats. Seeking the unity of action with the Social-Democrats in the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress, the Communists proceed from the premise that it is a case of collaboration between parties guided by different ideologies and political principles, having their own distinctive traditions and methods of struggle, etc. The principled line of the Communists towards co-operation and unity of action with the social-democratic parties does not rule out the problem of struggle against right opportunist ideology and the policy of class compromise.

Overcoming the resistance of the monopoly bourgeoisie and part of the right-wing leadership of Social-Democracy, the Communist parties have achieved in the last few years certain progress in organising co-operation and the unity of action with the social-democratic parties. This was reflected in their joint expression of solidarity with the people of Vietnam, in broad campaigns of support for the Chilean democrats, a number of important actions in favour of converting Europe into a continent of peace, security and co-operation, etc. Joint actions of Communists and Socialists in France, Italy, Japan, Finland, Portugal and other capitalist countries brought about tangible success for the working-class struggle. Unitary pro-

cesses are developing in the international and the majority of the national trade union movements.

Relying on the scientific basis of the struggle for working-class unity—Marxist-Leninist theory—the Communists invariably take account of the changes in the objective and subjective conditions of the class struggle and, accordingly, develop and enrich the platform of the unity of action of the working class, combining it dialectically with criticism of the theory and practice of right and "left" opportunism.

The historical circumstances now are shaping in such a way that in a variety of non-socialist countries there is a realistic possibility to rally around the working class a broad-based coalition uniting the majority of the nation.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is making an important contribution to the development of the unity of the labour movement, to the establishment of fruitful contacts between the Communists and the Social-Democrats.

* * *

The history of the international labour movement is one of a tough struggle and an intensive search for ways leading to a new, socialist society—a struggle full of heroism and great sacrifices. This struggle witnessed its ups and downs, victories and defeats. Not all events in this history have been studied in equal detail. The main thing is clear, however. Mankind's economic, social and cultural progress achieved by the present time is inseparably linked with the evolution, ascension and growth of the working class and the mass movement it generated. The working-class struggle was and remains to this day the mainspring of both partial and radical social transformations and, hence, of mankind's advance towards a new, socialist society. The success of this struggle is directly dependent on the strength and organisation, the influence and ideological single-mindedness of the political vanguard of the working class—the Marxist-Leninist parties, and on their international unity.

This conclusion is all the more important since Marxism, as Lenin underscored, poses problems "not only in the sense of explaining the past but also in the sense of a bold forecast of the future and of bold practical action for its achievement".[1]

Every success, every victory of the working class "bring nearer the hour when all mankind will break the social and moral

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 72.

chains of the past and enter a new world, the world of communism".[1]

The historical path traversed by the international labour movement and its great achievements are the precious earnest of the role the international working-class movement has yet to play in the future.

[1] L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Speeches and Articles, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1972, p. 305.

VOLUME ONE

THE EMERGENCE OF THE PROLETARIAT AND ITS EVOLUTION AS A REVOLUTIONARY CLASS

The Editorial Board:

A. S. Chernyayev, Chief Editor,
A. A. Galkin, T. T. Timofeyev
M. A. Zaborov

Contributors:

A. A. Galkin, D.Sc. (history), Head of the Team, Chapter 11
N. M. Meshcheryakova, Cand.Sc. (history), Chapter 1
M. A. Zaborov, D.Sc. (history), Chapters 2 and 3
Y. P. Mador, Cand.Sc. (history), Chapter 4
A. B. Reznikov, D.Sc. (history), Chapters 5, 7 and 9 (paragraph "The Proletariat and the Emancipation Struggle of Oppressed Peoples")
G. A. Bagaturia, Cand.Sc. (philosophy), Chapters 6 and 8
V. G. Mosolov, Chapter 6
V. S. Vygodsky, D.Sc. (economics), Chapter 8
I. A. Bach, D.Sc. (history), Chapter 9
N. Y. Kolpinsky, Cand.Sc. (history), Chapter 9
T. T. Timofeyev, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Chapter 10

Part One

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROLETARIAT INTO AN INDEPENDENT SOCIAL FORCE

Chapter 1

THE ORIGINS OF THE PROLETARIAT. THE INITIAL STAGE OF ITS EVOLUTION AND LABOUR STRUGGLE

The economic system of bourgeois society formed historically on the basis of hand-operated technology inherited from the feudal economy and originally established itself in manufactories. It was precisely in that period that capitalist production came into being with its new form of exploitation and masses of its wage slaves came on the scene.

Investigation of the objective prerequisites for the formation of a class of wage workers and the structure of the proletariat in the nascent bourgeois society, however, sheds light only on a part of the problem. The other part is the question of the roots, essence and trends of the historical initiative, activity and gainful employment of the proletariat from the time of the origination of capitalist relations. The labour struggle in the manufactory epoch opens the initial period of the history of proletarian battles. Analysing the antagonisms of society, Marx put the interpretation of the motives for proletarian struggle on the soil of historical materialism. Examining the historical origins of the antagonisms between labour and capital, Marx accentuated the fact that it is precisely the worker who is the vehicle of progress in the mechanism of capitalist production. "The worker here ranks higher than the capitalist from the very outset," Marx says, and, what is particularly important, "the worker as its (capitalist production—*Author*) victim rebels against it from the very outset and regards it as a process of his enslavement."[1]

Identification of precisely how the worker rebels against capitalist oppression "from the very outset" of the bourgeois system is included as a natural component in the study of the formative stage of the proletariat, a class which becomes the leading force of social progress in the future.

[1] Archives of Marx and Engels, Vol. II (VII), p. 35.

The history of individual countries and regions in different chronological periods throws into relief on a worldwide historical scale the laws of the origin and early development, as well as the conditions and forms of the initial struggle waged by the nascent proletariat, without glossing over but, on the contrary, emphasising the *specific* features of the process distinctive of every society and state. The meaning of the problem is fully revealed by comparing its positive solution in the light of the only truly scientific, Marxist-Leninist theory with the interpretation of the same problem by adherents to the bourgeois historical conception. The latter examine the genesis of capitalism and all its characteristic phenomena, including the birth of the proletariat, with a view to whitewashing the history of the emergence of capitalist society. "Capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."[1] This accusation addressed by Marx to the bourgeoisie and its intellectual élite as far back as the 19th century evokes from them down to this day a permanent polemic—now covert, now overt—with the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of one of the main problems of world history. This polemic pursues an unambiguous goal: to whitewash the methods used to consolidate the bourgeois system, which doomed the great masses of the working population to misfortune and suffering, to justify and embellish capitalism in particular by rectifying its early history.

THE ORIGINATION OF THE SYSTEM OF WAGE LABOUR

Wage labour existed under all antagonistic social systems but only in the last of them does its exploitation make the basis of society. "Without *wage labour*," Marx said, "there is no production of surplus value ... without production of surplus value there is no capitalist production, and hence no capital and no capitalist!"[2]. In an analysis of historical reality, however, it is not easy to draw a line of distinction between wage labour of the feudal epoch and capitalist wage labour. Not until the advent of wage labour in the system of capitalist relations and the criteria of the historical genesis of capitalism are identified can one answer the fundamental question as to when the worker exploited by the capitalist comes on the scene and the proletariat begins to take shape. Numerous discussions among Soviet and foreign historians attest to the difficulty of a concrete analysis of these problems.

The bourgeois order resting on the exploitation of wage labour by capital was born on the soil of disintegrating feudalism. In the bosom of the medieval system, already undermined but still predominant,

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 712.
[2] Archives of Marx and Engels, Vol. II (VII), p. 63.

there arose wage labour which had immediately preceded the one that later became an organic component of the new, capitalist structure. In Western Europe the rudiments of capitalist relations appeared in the 14th and 15th centuries. Although wage labour had also been used in other periods of feudalism, nevertheless it was precisely in the above-mentioned centuries, in the final stage of precapitalist development, that it first became the indispensable substance of the unstable and irregular rudimentary capitalist relations which had just taken shape here and there. They appeared in individual localities and still existed wholly in a feudal environment, i.e., "*alongside* the earlier modes of production but undermining them gradually everywhere...."[1]

Italy furnished the first examples of the origination of embryonic capitalist relations in the cities of Florence, Siena, Lucca, Bologna, etc. It was not accidental that it was here that "the urban labour of the Middle Ages already constitutes a great advance and serves as a preparatory school for the capitalist mode of production, as regards the continuity and steadiness of labour"[2]. His analysis of the transformation of the handicraft industries in Italian cities allowed Marx to conclude that in that country "capitalistic production developed earliest".[3] Incipient capitalist forms also existed sporadically in some Spanish cities, such as Barcelona, and in the Netherlands.

We know of a few handicraft shops which were founded on the early capitalist principles in England as well. It was in the 14th century that the Spring fullers of the then new industrial centre of Lavenham founded a fullery manned by hired workers. The names of some other employers who exploited wage workers have come down to us from that time: Abraham the tinner, the fullers Thomas Peacock, John Tame, Thomas Blanket. Enterprises based on the early capitalist principles were also founded in ship-building, the building trade, and other industries in England.

In the late 15th century 17-20 workers were hired in each of Lyons workshops (France), including some printshops. Even in the economically backward Austrian kingdom early capitalist relations began to develop in the mining industry of Tirol, Kärnten, and Krajina in the 15th century. These processes were also characteristic of the German regions proper.

---

[1] See K. Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf) 1857-1858*, Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur, Moskau, 1939, S. 410.

[2] Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 434.

[3] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 670;] see also K. Marx, *Grundrisse...*, op. cit., S. 410-11.

The "islets" of capitalist relations in the European countries are strongly emphasised and their significance exaggerated by those Western historians who promulgate the conception of the "crisis of feudalism" in the 14th-15th centuries and ascribe the maturation of capitalism to the same period—a conception which was given wide currency in the fifties of this century. The factual material produced during the last few decades mostly by Marxist scientists conclusively disproves this theory. It shows that the "crisis of feudalism" and the emergence of the capitalist system cannot be found even in the economically developed societies of Western Europe of the 14th-15th centuries. Wage labour, which could really be encountered at that time, had not yet converted into a *system*. Hired workers made up a negligible proportion of the population and, what is most important, their position, as Marx wrote, was "well protected... by the independent peasant proprietary in the country and the guild-organisation in the town. In country and town master and workmen stood close together socially".[1] This means that feudal relations, though eroded but still relatively stable, did not allow sale and purchase of labour power to assume a specifically capitalist character. This act had distinctive features as a result of the retention of the right of land ownership, the limited "social estate" character of capital in cities, etc. Even about the general system of economic relations in Britain in the 15th century Marx said categorically that they "excluded the possibility of capitalistic wealth",[2] i.e., systematic and wide employment of wage labour.

The 16th century ushered in the capitalist era. It was precisely from this time that the long process of stabilisation and then victory of the capitalist system and the establishment of manufactory capitalism was in evidence in Europe, the birthplace of capitalism. In some countries of this large region, which stands out as the region of *early genesis of capitalism*, this process ran a steady course through the 16th-18th centuries, although with a varying degree of intensity (Britain, France) and different results (Britain, the Netherlands); in others, it ran a meandering course with periods of regression (Italy, Spain, partly the German states). For instance, the first sprouts of capitalist relations in the Italian cities withered almost completely during the 17th and the first half of the 18th century, and it was not before the latter half of the 18th century that the new structure began to gain ground again. The same indirect way of genesis of capitalism was to be seen in Spain. There the capitalist structure, which had shown a lively growth as early as the first half of the 16th century, began to decline from the second half of the 16th century, and not

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 689.
[2] Ibid., p. 672.

until two centuries later did it show signs of revival. The rapid development of the elements of capitalist production in Germany until the mid-16th century led eventually to an early bourgeois revolution, but its defeat resulted in the country's economic impoverishment, the revival and consolidation of the traditional economic forms. Capitalist enterprise, which had been stifled in the German lands for two centuries, resuscitated in the 18th century, more definitely towards its end and in the early 19th century. In monarchic Austria the decay of feudalism and the genesis of capitalism, which had begun in the 16th century, lasted up to the first half of the 19th century.

The territories of Europe beyond the Elbe followed the pattern of *late development of capitalism*. From the mid-17th century, in conditions of the genesis and growth of manufactory capitalism in the advanced countries of Western Europe (and partly in connection with these processes on a worldwide scale) the greater part of the German lands (Schleswig-Holstein, Meklenburg, Pomerania, Prussia), the eastern provinces of the Austrian monarchy (including Czechia, Galicia, Silesia, and Hungary), Poland and Russia experienced a period of neo-feudal reaction. This did not rule out sporadic emergence of capitalist relations in some industries and in individual regions of Central and Eastern Europe throughout the 16th-18th centuries. Even in Russia, where serfdom had "assumed the crudest forms",[1] foci of capitalist relations appeared from time to time in these centuries, although they were unstable until the 1760s and died down at one place to flare up at another. In Poland capitalist enterprise became noticeable only in the late 18th century. The countries of South-East Europe (Serbia, Bulgaria, etc.), which had long been under the yoke of Turkish feudals, took the capitalist road just as belatedly. In Scandinavia the capitalist structure began to shape from the latter half of the 17th century in Sweden and, a century later, in Denmark. In what is now the United States the economic system in the colonial period (the 17th and especially the 18th century) was characterised by capitalist enterprise in rudimentary form. The first bourgeois revolution and the proclamation of independence greatly eased the conditions for successful capitalist enterprise.

The ways of the genesis of capitalism referred to above in general outline in different regions and countries are very essential for understanding the process of maturing and widening the system of wage labour. The universal character of commodity production under capitalism implies the conversion of labour into wage labour and manpower into a commodity. The 16th century opened the epoch when the

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The State", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 476.

system of wage labour and the proletariat actually came into being. It lasted until the final stage in the genesis of capitalism—the industrial revolution.

The prerequisite for the system of wage labour—the stem of the genesis of capitalism—was what is known as primary accumulation of capital. It was mainly rooted in the separation of the producer in precapitalist society (i.e., the peasant and the craftsman who had acquired personal freedom) from the means of production. The result was such polarisation of the commodity market that made possible the birth of capital as a social relation. The process of "primary accumulation" created the antipodes: the owner of the means of production and the means of subsistence—money, on the one hand, and the owner of only one commodity—labour power, personally free and deprived of the means of production, on the other.

Emphasising repeatedly the diversity of the *methods* of "primary accumulation" and the identity of their *content*, Marx summed up the social result of this fact in the metaphor: "the servitude of the labourer".[1] The latter meant, in the first place, the brutal exploitation of workers in town and country in precapitalist society in no matter how many different ways and, second, the plight of the expropriated masses of people dumped onto the labour market "as free and 'unattached' proletarians",[2] as Marx put it. Logically separated, these processes in real life coincided in time. Let us examine the first of them.

In Britain "primary accumulation" was launched on an immense scale by coercive methods in the late 15th century. It proceeded violently during three centuries, and the concept of "agrarian revolution" can be fully applied to that country alone. The notorious enclosures of the lands of personally free peasants, the agrarian laws of the presbyterian parliament enacted during the civil war of the mid-17th century and other acts of coercion secured the "liberation" of the bulk of the working people from property. "Primary accumulation" went on there simultaneously in another way as well when the expropriation of peasants and craftsmen was performed by the protracted and distressing operation of purely economic laws immanent in small-scale commodity production; as is known, the latter itself "brings forth the material agencies for its own dissolution".[3] In other words, the working population was deprived of the means of production as a result of the differentiation of the stratum of small producers, pauperisation and, finally, the complete expropriation of a definite part of the free toilers of the English countryside, as well as the craftsmen in towns. This was facilitated by the interfer-

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 669.
[2] Ibid., p. 669.
[3] Ibid., p. 714.

ence of merchant and loan capital. In addition, the process was spurred on by a system of taxes and government debt, protectionism and other levers of "primary accumulation".

Sixteenth-century English writers describe, for instance, the plight of the impoverished tin miners of Cornwall gradually losing their economic independence. Information on the proletarisation of the formerly independent craftsmen of Essex, Worcester and many other counties can be found in petitions of poor people to the royal government.[1]

Primarily as a result of coercive methods of "primary accumulation", as well as differentiation according to the property status the labour market in England widened enormously over the period. As evidenced by Gregory King, an English statistician of the late 17th century, destitute paupers and their families accounted at that time for one-fourth to one-half of the country's population of 5.5 million.[2]

At the turn of the 16th century the same process of expropriation took place in the Netherlands, although it was not as active and radical as in England and was the result primarily of differentiation. Already in the early 16th century 18 to 36 per cent of the population in individual villages were paupers. The differentiation and then expropriation of craftsmen in the Dutch cities took a more rapid course. The external sign of these processes was the decline of the guild organisation and the mass impoverishment of its members. Just as in Britain, an important lever of "primary accumulation" which largely contributed to the pauperisation of small commodity producers was taxation, especially in the cities—a system of excise-duties intended to pay off government loans and interest.

In France "primary accumulation" became a conspicuous phenomenon of the social reality in the 16th century. It was slow and passive in virtue of the specific conditions of economic development, but here too part of the free peasants were dispossessed of their land and joined the ranks of the proletariat. This occurred as a result of the differentiation of the peasantry and under the pressure of the feudalised urban bourgeoisie who appropriated peasant land holdings. The masses in the countryside and in towns became impoverished and proletarianised under the burden of enormous state taxes and the lease-hold system.

The expropriation of peasants in Spain was largely connected with the activities of Mestas, an organisation of rich feudal cattle-breed-

[1] *The Victoria History of the County of Cornwall*, Vol. 1, London, 1906, p. 558; *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic Series, 1637*, London, 1868, p. 64; *The Victoria History of the County of Suffolk*, Vol. II, London, 1907, pp. 26, 258; *The Victoria History of the County of Worcester*, Vol. II, London, 1906, p. 293.

[2] Gregory King, *Two Tracts*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins Press, 1936, p. 39.

ers. Ruining the crop farmers, Mestas stepped up its activity in seizing peasant lands in the late 15th century when the royal government legislatively enforced Mestas' rights to widen pastures at the expense of peasant arable land. There was an exodus of destitute peasants from the villages. Simultaneously the process of ruination of small artisans was in evidence in the cities. The masses languishing under the heel of money-lenders and the extremely burdensome tax system of Spanish absolutism underwent proletarianisation.

In Italy where the peasants in the greater part of its territory had freed themselves of feudal bondage at a relatively early time, earlier than in the rest of Europe, there began the expropriation of peasants who had not yet consolidated their title to land. The specific conditions of feudal reaction and Italy's economic stagnation checked the trend towards the consolidation of capitalist relations. The process of "primary accumulation" again intensified in the 18th century. It was expressed in an allout offensive of signors on the peasant common lands and administrative organisation of village communes. Enclosures of private landed estates became a veritable calamity for the peasants. In the Papal State almost one-sixth of the population was pauperised and lived on charity.

In the German states the process of "primary accumulation" substantially affected the peasants and the mass of the craftsmen as early as the late 15th century. It developed vigorously in a situation of growing production for the market throughout the first half of the 16th century, particularly in the areas of cattle-breeding, wine-growing and industrial crops. Impoverished peasants often left their native places for good. The expropriation in the cities proceeded against the background of the disintegration of guilds and growing differentiation within them. The same process went on in the mining industry—differentiation within miners' associations and proletarianisation of part of their membership.

In the Ost-Elbe lands of Germany, as well as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe the "second feudal enslavement of peasants" meant not only the preservation of the traditional landlord-serfdom system, but also its triumph in forms most oppressive for the peasants. Such was the prevailing tendency in this region although it was concurrent with a slow, hidden process of a different order, namely, the partial, incomplete expropriation of peasants and the appearance of wage labour in a number of districts in some fields of the economy. The yoke of serfdom of the mass of the peasantry both in the agricultural production of fiefs and in forced labour manufactories made "primary accumulation" almost impossible. The gradual liberation of peasants from feudal bondage accompanied by their partial or complete dispossession of land began east of the Elbe as late as the end of the 18th century.

The periods, rates, methods and specifics of this process in different countries of this region are the subject of discussions. In Poland it must have begun in the late 18th century when the differentiation of the peasantry resulted in the expropriation of a large proportion of it: in Rzecz Pospolita (except the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) at that time 16 per cent of the peasants were already landless and about 33 per cent, land-hungry; in Little Poland landless and land-hungry peasants accounted for 87 per cent and in Great Poland, for 61 per cent. In Czechia in the late 18th century (1780) there were more than 400,000 landless and land-hungry peasants, and in 1840 there were 700,000 agricultural workers with their own land holdings, the total population being 4 million. In Moravia in the 1830s the number of landless peasants dispossessed by enclosures was 132,492, and that of farm hands, 155,000. In Russia it was not until the 19th century that "primary accumulation" became a more or less continuous, if only slow, process whose main distinction was the retention of certain means of production in the hands of peasants subject to metayage.

On the whole, the region under review was characterised by yet another distinction: the emancipation of peasant serfs—a sine qua non of "primary accumulation"—was effected here by higher authority, by means of legislative reforms in the late 18th and the 19th century: the peasants were emancipated in some parts of the Austrian monarchy— Czechia, Krajuna, Moravia, Galicia (in 1781); in Denmark (in 1788); in individual German lands—Baden (1793), Westphalia (1807), Prussia (1807-1811); in Austria, Hungary (1848); in Russia (1861), in Rumania (1864). After the abolition of serfdom by this undemocratic method the peasantry was doomed to undergo the agonising process of slow abolition of feudal relations in the countryside and the development of capitalism after the Prussian fashion (dearth of land for the peasants, enslaving terms of leasehold, a system of workoffs on landlords' farms and other semi-feudal forms of exploitation), entailing the ruin, impoverishment, complete or partial expropriation of the mass of the peasantry.

In the countries of South-East Europe "primary accumulation" was impeded by the feudal system of the Ottoman Empire. The most intensive period of expropriation of the peasants and craftsmen in Bulgaria was the last two decades of the 19th century. Here and in the neighbouring Balkan countries the process of "primary accumulation" was speeded up by the abolition of the Turkish feudal regime. In Serbia this expropriation was incomplete, failing to lead to the final eviction of peasants from the land and occurring mostly by way of differentiation according to the property status. A similar process was characteristic of the craftsmen's guilds in Bulgarian towns (where differentiation in the stratum of craftsmen had begun already under the Turkish rule).

The distinctions of "primary accumulation" in Britain's American colonies were largely determined by the fact that they were within the economic orbit of the metropolitan country and under the powerful influence of its socio-economic development. If this factor is overlooked, much will seem inexplicable in the emergence of American capitalism in the colonial period. Whereas in Europe the essence of "primary accumulation" was the deprivation of the producer of the means of production, in America, according to the hypothesis suggested by Soviet historians, this process was distinctive in that the ruling quarters sought to prevent the conversion of colonists, dispossessed in their homelands (Britain or other countries of the Continent), into landowners. These immigrants were mostly so-called servants. According to the US historian A. E. Smith, in 17th-century colonial America with its legends of "free and easy" access to the land, only just over 4 per cent of the total number of immigrating servants actually staked out a claim to a land plot.[1]

Another distinction in the economic development of Britain's American colonies, which affected the process of "primary accumulation" was the broad exploitation of black slaves (along with "White slaves"—servants), which, as Marx said, "precludes free wage-labour".[2] Plantation slavery—"a second edition of slavery"—was a revival of the slave-owners' methods of exploitation in conditions of "primary accumulation" and the genesis of capitalism.

Thus, as it follows from the foregoing, the working population was expropriated by a variety of ways and means in chronological periods differing from region to region and from country to country. For all that, on a worldwide scale the development of this process in the advanced societies of Europe in the 16th-18th centuries may be described as fundamental. The expropriation of the people "is written in the annals of mankind in the letters of blood and fire" (Marx).[3] Many pages in these chronicles are well explained by contemporaries of those events—authors of most diverse ideological affiliations. Thomas More wrote of the tragedy of peasants: "Away they trudge... out of their known and accustomed houses..."[4] Jean de La Bruyère, a bold critic of the vices of his age, recreated a scene of the excruciating indigence of 17th-century French peasants, "sallow-faced, sunscorched", stooped over the land, supporting their lives with rye bread,

---

[1] Abbot Emerson Smith, "The Indentured Servant and Land Speculation in Seventeenth-Century Maryland." In: *The American Historical Review*, April 1935, Vol. XL, No. 3, p. 470.

[2] See Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part II, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 303.

[3] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 669.

[4] Thomas More, *The Utopia*, D. van Nostrand Company, Inc., Princeton, New York, 1947, p. 34.

water, and edible roots.[1] The Spanish economist Luis Ortiz described in his treatise facts of the disastrous impact of the state fiscal policy on the masses in the 16th century. Peasants ruined by the burden of heavy taxes weighing on "the shoulders of the poor" abandoned the land and craftsmen deprived of their economic independence also turned proletarian.[2] Contemporaries compared the life of Tuscany peasants in the 18th century to that of animals, while the Italian Enlightener Pietro Verri described the fate of the pauperised peasants of Lombardy as follows: "The wretched peasant, bare-footed, in rags, with nothing but bread of rye and millet to eat ... his bed is a litter of straw, his home an ugly hovel, his life misery and his work drudgery..."[3] S. Tesedík, a progressive Slovak economist, described in 1784 the results of the property differentiation in the villages, the appearance of rich peasants, whom he called "vampires": "Vampires and despots are to be found among the peasants as well; influential and well-to-do peasants seek to appropriate all privileges and profits and to impose all obligations and burdens on the poorest part of the population...."[4] Contemporaries with a keen sense of social justice, while failing to comprehend the essence of the expropriation of the masses they witnessed, did not, nevertheless, overlook the characteristic events of their time and described in their numerous works the hard lot of the peasants and craftsmen who had lost their former material basis.

The second of the logically separate stages of "wage slavery" in the process of "primary accumulation" was connected with the further destinies of the expropriated when they, torn out of their habitual conditions of work and life, often found themselves en masse out of work and without any means of subsistence. Naturally, not infrequently a toiler of precapitalist society immediately turned into a wage worker. As evidenced by a 16th-century author, an English miner was often over head and ears in debt to the money-lender and, being veritably in his net, preferred to work for hire. The ruined craftsmen of an English town accurately defined the simple change of their economic status: they had been small masters, now they became work-

---

[1] *Les caractères ou les moeurs de ce siècle* par La Bryère, Paris, Charpentier Librairie-éditeur, 1853, pp. 290-291.

[2] See E. E. Litavrina, "A Memorial by the Spanish Economist Luis Ortiz and Protectionist Ideas Originated in Spain in the 16th Century".—In: *Srednіye veka*, Issue XIX, Moscow, 1961, p. 144 (in Russian).

[3] Cesare Spellanzon, *Storia del Risorgimento e dell'unità d'Italia*, Vol. I, Rizzoli & C., Milano, 1933, p. 22.

[4] Quoted from: A. I. Ozolin, I. I. Udaltsov, A. M. Kharkova, "The Disintegration of the Feudal-Serfdom System and the Development of Capitalist Relations in Agriculture in the Czech and Slovak Lands in the Late 18th and the Early 19th Century", *The History of Czechoslovakia*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1956, pp. 321-22 (in Russian).

ers themselves.[1] In the London bakers' company completely impoverished masters immediately became hired workers for its rich masters. In the latter half of the 16th century many French printshop craftsmen were ruined and hired as wage workers by printshop owners. Similar evidence is found in materials on the history of Sweden and a very different part of Europe—the Austrian provinces of Croatia and Slavonia.

On the whole, however, the capitalist forms of production did not emerge and widen as rapidly as the process of expropriation. In other words, proletarians dumped onto the labour market were absorbed by the emerging manufactory by no means as fast as they appeared. The capacious labour market formed as a result of "primary accumulation", therefore, was simply a potential market.

Many other causes were also responsible for the slow growth of capitalist relations for all the opportunities dormant in the immensely increased labour market. Not the least of them was the sum of free capital often too modest in the period under review, the need for experience and specialised skills in handling manual tools still prevailing—qualities often lacking in new proletarians, and the inability of peasants and craftsmen immediately to adapt themselves to new conditions of existence and their unwillingness to submit to the new discipline of labour.

By virtue of the above-mentioned objective and subjective reasons, "in most cases from stress of circumstances",[2] Marx said, the expropriated existed for long periods as outlawed beggars, vagrants, homeless persons with no settled abode or livelihood. Vagrancy in Europe—this veritable social disaster—has become a "general and permanent appearance".[3] In Britain the enactment of the act on the poor in 1601 meant in effect official consent to the results of the expropriation, although it was tacit consent, because as the well-known English radical William Cobbett commented, the authors of this act were ashamed of stating its motives publicly and hence it was published without any preamble contrary to all customs.[4] In France similar acts on the poor also acknowledged the existence of an enormous number of "mendicant beggars". In the mid-17th century the homeless in Paris even set up their own community known as the "kingdom of vagrants". In Brittany's capital city of Rennes there were a few thousand paupers in the mid-18th century. They hailed not

---

[1] Quoted from: SPD, 1637, p. 64.

[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 686.

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 69.

[4] William Cobbett, *Histoire de la "Réforme" protestante, en Angleterre et en Irlande*, Louvain, Chez Vanlinthout et Vandenzande, 1826, p. 576.

only from the villages and towns of Brittany itself but also from Normandy and Maine. In the Netherlands and Spain the problem of vagrancy also arose in its full magnitude, as was evidenced by the laws on the poor enacted there.

Eyewitnesses were astounded by the mass of "idle rabble" in Europe in the 16th-18th centuries. "For this is sure—that in no country of Christendom, for the number of people, you shall find so many beggars as be here in England,"[1] a 16th-century English author remarked bitterly. In the Netherlands pauperism became so widespread that the authorities of the cities of Leiden, Amsterdam, and Hondshoot issued special badges to "idle" poor people which entitled them to ask for alms. Vagrancy and beggary were the seamy side of "primary accumulation" in Germany as well. The above-quoted Spanish economist Ortiz complained that the cities of Toledo, Burgos, and Valladolid swarmed with poor people who had fled their villages and were out of work.

Vagrancy, which worried the propertied classes so much as a factor disturbing the atmosphere and a source of unrest, called to life a series of statutory acts, which Marx described as "bloody legislation".[2] This legislation not only admitted in effect the existence of pauperism but also officially described the expropriated toilers as idle vagrants. It ruthlessly punished unfortunate proletarians for idleness, declaring it hypocritically to be the cause of all misfortunes of paupers. In England in the 16th-18th centuries dozens of statutes were enacted, which constituted in toto a complete system of assessing "criminal offences" of the poor and a corresponding scale of penalties, including capital punishment, slavery, flogging in public, branding and many other methods of punishment. In the 17th-18th centuries the colonial authorities in America sought to imitate the laws of England against vagrant, idle and dissolute persons (a Virginia act of 1672; the resolution of the legislature of Rhode Island in 1750 to introduce into the colony all the British statutes "related to the poor and relating to masters and their apprentices, so far as they are applicable in this colony"[3]). Similar laws began to be passed in France from the 1540s. The later legislative acts of 1551, 1553, 1555, 1558, etc. contained threats and prescribed cruel penalties: flogging, imprisonment, galley slavery, capital punishment. The ordinance of 1777 prescribed hard labour for any able-bodied pauper of 16 to 60 years of age. In addition to statutory laws, city authorities issued injunctions against "vagrants

[1] Thomas Starkey, *A Dialogue Between Reginald Pole & Thomas Lupset*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1948, p. 89.

[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 686.

[3] Richard B. Morris, *Government and Labor in Early America*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1947, p. 6.

and beggars". A decree passed in Lyons in 1561 ordered all beggars and vagrants to leave the city on pain of death by hanging summarily. Cruel penalties against "idle" poor people were also prescribed by the statutory laws in the Netherlands in the 16th century, and later by the national laws and "proclamations" of city magistratures of 17th-century Holland, a model capitalist state. In Sweden in the 17th century a pauper who did not work for hire was penalised as a "vagrant".

The plight of the masses attending "primary accumulation" is what makes the "mystery" of the prehistory of capitalism. Bourgeois science is loath to unravel this "mystery", because this would mean recognition of what was by no means the immaculate conception of the capitalist society and its main classes—the wage workers and the capitalist expropriators. To explain the origins of these antagonistic classes, bourgeois historiography has evolved hundreds of theories, all of which, however, ignore the main fact necessary for a correct understanding of this process—the expropriation of the people. In the last two decades the scientific interpretation of the historical prerequisites for the emergence of the proletariat have been opposed perhaps in the most outspoken and primitive manner by the American economic historian and sociologist F. A. Hayek. He vehemently attacked the Marxist-Leninist conception of this problem as a myth of expropriation, alleging that the latter term "is especially misleading when, as is often the case, it is connected with the idea of the rise of the propertyless proletariat, which by some devious process have been deprived of their rightful ownership of the tools for their work." Instead he proposed a Malthusian interpretation of the origins of the proletariat, which "was an additional population", while "the horrors of early capitalism" experienced by the masses are a legend based on "the opinions of some of the contemporaries" which are "indeed the main sources of the present beliefs". Hayek did not attempt to substantiate his arguments let alone support them with documentary evidence.[1]

Wage slavery which predetermined the development of capitalist relations served as the starting point of development that led eventually to the enslavement of the expropriated toiler. What methods were used to subjugate destitute people to the new form of exploitation?

In what way were outlawed paupers turning into wage workers? How was the system of wage labour taking shape?

In the aforesaid we have pointed out one of such ways—"a simple change of form". The commodity producer deprived of his economic

[1] F. A. Hayek, "History and Politics".—In: *Capitalism and the Historians*, Ed. by F. A. Hayek, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1954, pp. 10, 15, 16.

independence immediately came under the yoke of capitalist exploitation as a wage worker. In the rural areas the "simple change of form" amounted to the direct substitution of capitalist for feudal exploitation. The ways of subjugating the impoverished village or city craftsmen to the capitalist land speculator were well described by Marx and Lenin. That was a gradual transformation of formerly independent small masters into economically dependent workers. Outwardly, the capitalist relations between the worker and the employer took the form of contractual terms: on the pay rates, the quantity of produce, the deadlines for delivery, etc. This method of enslavement of labour by capital may also be listed under the "simple change of form".

In addition to the "simple change of form", there was a widespread system of forming a capitalist relation between the seller of labour power and the owner of capital through various contracts on the "free" market concluded not immediately after the expropriation but after some time. In 16th-century France, for instance, a worker's employment by a printshop owner was usually written down in a contract stipulating the work time (1 to 3 years, as a rule) and pay, which was partly in cash and partly in kind (meals). In England the population of some counties knew well on which days contracts between workers and employers were concluded on the local market: In Rufford (Nottinghamshire) these days were October 16 and 26 of each year; Watlington (Oxfordshire) such contracts were made at the autumn fair late in September. Interesting information on labour contracts is to be found in documents on the history of Croatia and Slavonia of the late 18th century. The wily and successful tannery owner Zarija Stojanovic regularly entered the terms of such contracts into his ledger. In Poland's manufactories free workers were also engaged on a contract. It was concluded for a long period and virtually assigned the hired worker to the manufactory. In Russia in the second quarter of the 19th century "free men" from among landlords' or state peasants on quitrent or exiles seeking jobs at gold mines in Siberia and the Urals concluded contracts directly with the management. Peasants were recruited by brokers to work by contract on government ship convoys, on grain carriers and other river craft. Violations of contractual obligations were subject to investigation by local authorities (in England, for instance, at quarterly hearings of justices of the peace). In the American colonies, where an acute manpower shortage always existed, there were widespread practices of entangling the workers with various gratuities, small tips, and special terms to tie the worker to the employer (the so-called "kick-back" system), so that the hired worker was unable to leave his master upon the expiry of the labour contract.[1] The

[1] **Richard B** Morris. *Government and Labor in Early America*, p. 214.

workers in 17th-century Sweden were bound by the labour contract, since they did not dare to leave their jobs as long as they received their wages, i.e., as long as this was profitable to their employer. In Russia the law of 1835 specifically emphasised that hired workers were forbidden to leave their jobs until the expiry of the contract.

As pointed out above, the expropriated peasants and craftsmen could not quickly adapt themselves to the new conditions of work and life. They were unwilling to submit to the new labour discipline and, hence, often preferred to be vagrants. Arguing against bourgeois theoreticians, Marx wrote ironically that great labours had to be exerted to provide the conditions for the free operation of the "eternal laws of Nature" of capitalism extolled by apologetical science. For this it was necessary not only to deprive the producers of the tools for their work but also "to transform, at one pole, the social means of production and subsistence into capital, at the opposite pole, the mass of the population into wage-labourers, into 'free labouring poor', that artificial product of modern society".[1]

In the epoch of the establishment of the system of wage labour one more way of forming capitalist relations assumed great importance. Here the factor of non-economic coercion—a powerful tool for creating the new mode of production—was brought into full play. Whereas the first two ways of those pointed out above were based on a "voluntary" contract eventually characteristic, as Lenin underscored, of "ideal", i.e., developed capitalism, the last way was based on violence, on direct coercion. In Lenin's metaphor, non-economic coercion is the "discipline of the bludgeon", whereas the "voluntary" contract principle of forming the "mutual relationship" between worker and master implies the "discipline of hunger".[2]

When the capitalist structure was in the process of formation, consolidation and expansion, still existing wholly in the atmosphere of feudalism (the Netherlands, England, France, and other countries before the bourgeois revolutions) or even when it was winning and manufactory capitalism was gradually turning into the predominant mode of production (the Netherlands and England after the bourgeois revolutions), the mechanism of subjugation of labour to capital worked not only in consequence of the effect of the "dull compulsion of economic relations" (Marx)[3], but also due to direct coercion. The emergent or newly formed relations of production could function only with the aid of an additional lever—coercion.

The non-economic coercion inherited from feudalism in the epoch of "primary accumulation" and early capitalism was applied by the

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 711.

[2] See V. I. Lenin, "Agrarian Question in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1963, p. 84; Vol. 29, p. 419.

[3] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 689.

state. State power legislatively established the "normal" dependence of labour on capital and realisation of this "norm", i.e., extraction of surplus value by the emerging bourgeoisie. The statutes against the expropriated, in addition to the refined and detailed system of punishment of paupers for their "addiction" to vagrancy and "idleness", also expressed the "concern" of the state for forcing the "idle" population to work, although no conditions for it as yet existed. English legislation is most typical in this respect. At the very outset of the mass expropriation in England the law of 1495 was adopted, which started a series of brutal and at the same time hypocritical acts. It proclaimed the duty of paupers to work, gave vaguely worded advice to local authorities to help poor people find work, to teach working skills to their children. The statute on apprentices enacted in 1562 enjoined paupers and especially their children to undergo apprenticeship, i.e., in fact, to work for hire, because apprenticeship at that time was nothing but a camouflaged form of capitalist exploitation.

After the bourgeois revolution of the mid-17th century the English parliament started to encourage new methods of coercive policy. Among them one should mention in the first place the establishment of work houses prescribed by the law. Although bourgeois researchers go out of their way to accentuate the "charitable" role of work houses, in reality they were primarily a means of compulsory involvement of paupers into the orbit of new exploitation, a peculiar form of capitalistically organised enterprises.

In the arsenal of means of non-economic coercion to work in the new capitalist conditions of England the law on settlement of 1662 was applied on the widest scale. It required local authorities to secure the settlement of paupers. It tied, in effect, poor people to parishes and thereby served the interests of the entrepreneurs who needed a guaranteed supply of manpower. Local authorities sent at their discretion some paupers either to apprenticeship or to work for hire, others to work houses, still others to reformatories and jails.

The situation in the country created by legislation on the poor oppressed by the arbitrary rule of justices of the peace and entangled in a net of injunctions, cavils, and coercive acts fully dovetailed with the picture of the non-economic coercion of the people by a variety of methods that Lenin described at a later date.[1]

Legislation on compulsory employment was also enacted in other European countries, although only in England was it developed into a detailed system. In France work houses also began to be opened from the mid-16th century. They became widespread in the Nether-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, "Famine", *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 528

lands as well. Here forcible attachment of children from city orphanages to manufactories on a contract became common practice. In France concern for this was also shown by Colbert, who prescribed inspectors of "royal" manufactories in 1680 and later to compile lists of children of poor families (from the age of 10 years) so as to put them to work. The policy of the French state in general was intended to "chain" the workers to the manufactories. In Spain in the first half of the 16th century the authorities also attempted to turn vagrants and beggars into wage labour. In 1551 the Cortes of Castilla submitted a petition proposing that an official be appointed to each community with more than 1,000 residents to detain all vagrants and force them to work in industry. Forcible assignment of labour to capitalist enterprises was also practised in Sweden in the 17th-18th centuries. In Prussia, as well as in France, it was a matter of routine to hand over to enterprises convicted vagrants who were thereby turned into workers. We know of cases of instituting "spinning schools" for the poor in America of the colonial period (for instance, in Boston in 1769). In Austria, Prussia and a number of other countries in the 18th century various "schools", asylums, orphanages supplied entrepreneurs with manpower almost free under the guise of sending children into apprenticeship. In Hungary the law on the poor of 1775 provided for the establishment of special workshops to which beggars were confined forcibly. In 1780 about 20,000 poor people were "employed" in this manner. In the late 18th century handicraft workshops were set up in the guise of orphanages. From the end of the 18th century capitalist enterprises made wide use of compulsory labour of beggars and orphans in Poland as well. In 1768 a fulling mill in Warsaw used forced labour of orphans and inmates of reformatories. The Krakow charitable society supplied beggars to a fulling mill in the city. In Warsaw and Zelenki 300 orphans worked at the manufactory of the merchant entrepreneur Paschalis, and 200 beggars at Regon's manufactory in Warsaw. There is no need to elaborate on the theme of the complete, unchallenged operation of non-economic coercion in these and other countries where coercion to labour was a matter of course not only in the period of serfdom but also after its abolition.

Which of the ways of forming capitalist relations was the most widespread in historical reality? In each concrete period each country used this or that way to a different extent, depending on many circumstances. It can be stated quite definitely, however, that non-economic coercion had a fairly significant role to play everywhere.

In this way complicated processes superimposed one upon another in real life ("primary accumulation", expansion of the labour market at the expense of the expropriated, outlawed proletarians and, finally, their subordination to the new, capitalist exploitation) led

to the establishment of a system of wage labour as the basis for the growth and consolidation of capitalist production.

What does modern bourgeois thought oppose to the Marxist-Leninist conception of the origin of the proletariat? Besides scholars of the Hayek type acting in this field as dilettantes, there is a large group of researchers studying the concrete socio-economic problems of the genesis of capitalism. The main and most typical interpretation they give of the origins of wage labour and the proletariat boils down to the idea of the division of labour. True, different economic historians imply by this either the differentiation of the labour functions in the sphere of handicraft production in the late stage of feudalism or the demarcation between commercial and production functions. In either case, however, the main idea is that in the course of the "natural division of labour" there emerged "employers", who assumed the functions of production management. The lot that fell to the main mass of the toilers was to carry on an activity to which they were best adapted, i.e., manual work. In consequence of peaceful evolution the "control of industry was vested in the hands of the employers of labour who stood outside the ranks of the manual craftsmen".[1] This lop-sided conception completely ignores the objective composite historical processes discussed above. It abstracts itself from the main thing—the expropriation of the masses, the relations in the sphere of property. It may be said that the ideological basis for solving this problem by modern bourgeois science has not become stronger compared to the 19th-century conceptions criticised by Marx.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EMERGING PROLETARIAT

The system of wage labour implies the existence of a relatively large number of workers exploited capitalistically at enterprises of various kinds. Industrial establishments of a large size for that time played an economically decisive role in England in the 16th-17th centuries: in the fulling industry which produced for the home and foreign markets; in mining and metal-working, where large investments were required; in ship-building, in the glass-blowing industry and paper manufacture, as well as in many industries connected with foreign markets. They were less noticeable in the traditional crafts which produced for the local market (shoe-makers,

[1] E. Lipson, *A Short History of Wool and Its Manufacture*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1953, p. 69; *The Economic History of England*, Vol. II, London, 1943, p. 4. For an analysis of similar views see N. M. Meshcheryakova, "The Formation of the Proletariat as Described by K. Marx and His Modern Bourgeois 'Critics'".—In: *Moscow University Bulletin. History*, 1968, No. 3, pp. 26-39 (in Russian).

hatters, glove-makers, etc.). Large fulleries employed hundreds of workers. The capitalistically organised manufactory of Briggs and Robinson in the coal-mining industry of Yorkshire employed 500 workers. The capitalist Spillman, a successful paper manufacturer, exploited 600 hired workers and Mansell in the glass-blowing industry, up to 4,000. Of course, such a large number of workers in one enterprise was a rare exception at that time. The number of enterprises which employed thousands of workers had considerably grown in England by the mid-18th century. A total of 1,500 weavers manned the looms of one large silk manufacturer, who had subsidiaries in London, Dorset, Cheshire, and Gloucestershire. Up to 3,275 workers were concentrated in the dockyards of Kent alone. In the coal industry centre of Newcastle there were up to 40,000 miners, dockers, and other workers. In prosperous Lancashire there were at least 30,000 workers concentrated in the cotton mills. Up to 10,000 workers were employed in the ceramic industry of Staffordshire and about 45,000 in the metal-working plants of growing Birmingham.

Taking a look at the countries of continental Europe, the picture of the prevalence of wage labour may be illustrated with the following data. A large printshop in 16th-century Antwerp employed up to 100 workers. The textile mills of Amsterdam had hundreds of workers, just as in England. In Utrecht one silk-weaving mill employed 500 workers. The total number of workers in the young bourgeois republic of Holland reached half a million.

The textile mills, cannon works and arsenals of France exploited hundreds of workers in the 16th-17th centuries. In the Lyons printshops of the mid-16th century the number of hired workers was about 1,500. The silk-weaving mills in Lyons employed 12,000 workers, in Tours, 40,000. In the mid-18th century more than 5,000 textile workers were engaged in the linen factories of Rennes, Brittany.

In Spain in the first half of the 16th century a capitalist owning a fullery exploited 200-300 workers. In the late 18th century 300,000 workers were employed in the country's manufactories. A similar picture was observed in 18th-century Italy. In the silk crafts of Piedmont 7,108 workers were engaged in the first half of the century and 16,143 in the second half. Individual silk-mills had 70-120 employees. In Milan one entrepreneur in the wool industry employed 2,500 workers, but ordinary mills had 300-400 workers. In the porcelain industry near Florence some capitalists engaged a few hundred workers. In the first half of the 18th century the city industries of Sweden employed about 11,000 hired workers (from 15 years of age).

In America of the colonial period the biggest iron works had more than 100 workers. An interesting document has survived: records kept by a capitalist organising a foundry: to smelt 500 tons of iron

he had to hire 144 workers of different trades. In 1775 a cotton manufactory in Philadelphia employed 400 women.

A similar situation prevailed in the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century in the European countries of the late genesis of capitalism. In Czechia thousands of workers laboured in textile manufactories. Between 1785 and 1788 the number of weavers in the flax industry rose from 54,894 to 71,979 and that of spinners, from 180,066 to 234,000. In the late 18th century 200 hired workers laboured in Leitenberger's manufactory in Prague alone. Chorgot's manufactory in Prague exploited 140 workers, and Steirer's, 300. In Hungary there were quite a few large manufactories in the second quarter of the 19th century. For instance, the manufactory in Mosonmagyaróvar had more than 3,300 workers. In Poland, the well-known manufactory of Dangel in Warsaw employed 300 workers. In Wroclaw there were 22,500 manufactory workers in 1792. In Lódz the cotton manufactories had a total of 11,500 workers in 1830.

In Russia, in the last three to four decades of the 18th century, when the capitalist structure had begun to take shape, the number of hired workers in the spinning mills alone increased from 45,000 to 110,000. The total of hired workers in the late 18th century was roughly equal to 500,000. True, most of them were peasants employed in industry as seasonal workers. The development of the capitalist manufactories based on wage labour led to the ouster of manufactories using compulsory serf labour. From the late 18th century this process became irreversible. The cotton industry was a typical capitalist business. In 1804 it exploited 8,100 workers, in 1820, 36,000, hired workers accounting for 85 and 96 per cent respectively. Other thriving capitalist industries were silk manufacture (in 1804—74 per cent; in 1825—83 per cent of hired labour) and linen manufacture, in which wage labour accounted for two-thirds of the total. Towards 1825 the number of hired workers in industry reached 210,600.

In the iron works of the Urals, that citadel of serfdom, wage labour began to gain ground in the first half of the 19th century. In 113 works of Yekaterinburg, Perm, Orenburg, Vyatka, Kazan, and Tobolsk 3 per cent of the work force were wage workers, who were used, it is true, on auxiliary jobs in their overwhelming majority. A large number of workers were employed at the Verkh-Iset works (2,500), the Rezhevsk works (2,000), the Sysert works (1,000).

All these data are essential for the following two reasons. First, they give a graphic idea of what the system of wage labour looked like in reality and, second, they indicate the exact number of workers at individual, most promising enterprises. The question of labour distribution between the different kinds of enterprises is even more

important. The answer to it makes it possible to determine the structure of the proletariat which was then in its formative stage.

Simple capitalist co-operation, the manufactory in its centralised, scattered and combined forms are the historically evolved progressive forms of industrial organisation in the early stage of capitalism.

Co-operation, which was in itself the basis for all forms of capitalist production, failed to become stable and typical in its primordial, simple form. It is identifiable in sources describing, for instance, the enterprises of a master who employed many spinners to produce large batches of yarn for the market, or a master of weavers "putting to work", to use the usual phrase of contemporaries, a few hands to weave cloth.[1] In both the first and second cases economic common sense dictated to the entrepreneur the need to improve his business as soon as he had enough capital. The first master engaged in his workshop weavers and workers of other specialities in cloth manufacture, whereas the second one subordinated to his capital the labour of workers engaged in operations preparatory to weaving. At any rate, the economic common sense of the capitalist converted simple co-operation into co-operation with the division of labour inside the workshop, i.e., into a manufactory. The simple form survived only where special circumstances prevailed, for instance, in work houses (the difficulty of training paupers in various crafts, inadequate capital, etc.).

The stable, characteristic form of progressive organisation of industry was the manufactory, which prevailed in the developed societies of Western Europe from the 16th century to the last third of the 18th century, and in others—until the middle and even to the end of the 19th century (in these cases it already combined with a factory). It was precisely the manufactory that swallowed up the expropriated victims of "primary accumulation". What was the manufactory? Examination of its organisation is exactly what helps comprehend the characteristics of the manufactory proletariat of that epoch.

First of all, in all European countries the scattered (or decentralised) and the combined (or mixed) manufactories assumed great importance among capitalist enterprises. The uncombined (or anonymous, as it is sometimes called in the literature) manufactory came to be established in cities, especially new ones, where no guild associations existed, or in old cities—on the basis of the disintegration of the corporate system. This manufactory, however, struck the strongest roots in the rural localities. Wool-weaving, carpet-weaving and other scattered manufactories were set up on the basis

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1634-1635*, London, 1865, p. 272; ibid., 1633-1634, London, 1863, pp. 150-51.

of the rural industries in the Netherlands. They were a conglomeration of home craftsmen's workshops united by individual capital. In France from the 16th century the basis for the wide spread of such composite manufactories was the rural industries—fulleries, tanneries and other businesses which flourished mostly around cities. Near Paris, Bordeaux, Rouen, Toulouse and other centres there sprang up whole districts where scattered manufactories developed (for instance, silk-weaving). In Normandy, Picardy, Poitou, and Languedoc territorially scattered cloth manufactories also prevailed. Such manufactories were established at an early time in the production of linen as well. Capitalist exploitation of home workers in the villages had become the most widespread in France on the eve of the revolution. A whole army of home workers served city merchant entrepreneurs in Dophine, Touraine and the above-mentioned localities of the country.

In Spain in the first half of the 16th century decentralised textile manufactories formed in the environs of Toledo, Segovia, Seville, and Cuenca and later, after a long interval, already in the 18th century, they arose in Catalonia, Galicia, and the Basque country. In the latter half of the 18th century textile manufactories (of the decentralised type) again sprang up in Italy: in Lombardy, Peidmont, and other places. In 18th-century Sweden scattered workshops also became the predominant form of manufactory. They were known to exist in the textile industry, and even the Nortälje armoury was organised on the principle of deconcentrated production. The home crafts of peasant spinners became the basis for scattered manufactories in different lands of 18th-century Germany: in the Rhine regions, in Württemberg, Thuringia, Westphalia, and Silesia. Austria was not an exception: in the 18th century capital subordinated here the rural home crafts both in the textile and other industries. In Czechia scores of thousands of spinners and weavers working at home were subjected to capitalist exploitation in a system of scattered manufactories. In the late 18th century the well-known cotton manufactory in Prague exploited more than 4,000 spinners who lived in the city's environs. New Czech glass manufactories (22 enterprises) used thousands of hired home workers. In Poland the decentralised manufactory also developed from the late 18th century. In Silesia linen and cotton production in the villages followed the pattern of a scattered capitalist manufactory. In Galicia the peasant crafts provided the basis for setting up scattered manufactories. The same picture was observed in Hungary in the late 18th and the early 19th century, particularly in the textile and iron industries. In Pest and Buda hosiery production was organised within a system of decentralised manufactories. The biggest textile manufactory of Cholič in 1807 exploited 2,000 home workers in 30 villages.

Materials on the history of Bulgaria also evidence the wide spread of scattered home production.

In Russia such manufactories became conspicuous in the textile industry over the last few decades of the 18th century. They sprang up in wood-working, shoe-making and other fields. Precious material on the decentralised manufactory in post-reform Russia is to be found in Lenin's works.[1]

The mixed manufactory was typical of all countries without exception: scattered production was supplemented here with a more or less sizeable workshop, in which the completing operation in manufacturing a certain commodity was performed, as a rule. In the textile industry scattered everywhere such final processes in manufacturing broadcloth, linen, silk and cotton fabrics were usually weaving or dying or dressing. It was these operations that were often concentrated in workshops included in scattered manufactories and gathering weavers or dyers or dressers under one roof. That was how the mixed manufactory came into being, which was a combination of scattered workshops of home workers and a larger workshop of the master. This manufactory was a transitional form between a scattered and a centralised one. The biggest cloth manufactory of Sasvar in Hungary exploited 9,325 workers, of whom 8,462 worked at home and only a small proportion were gathered under one roof.

The centralised manufactory, which was connected for its economic structure with the organic process of production, gathered under one roof workers performing various partial operations. It was set up usually in new industries, which in the 16th-18th centuries were glass and paper production, printing, etc. Successful entrepreneurs, however, could afford to organise a large combined workshop with the division of labour within it also in such fields traditional to all European countries as the textile industry. In England, for instance, centralised manufactories existed in such an ancient industry as fullery. Towards the mid-18th century many such enterprises were established practically in all industries. The "royal" centralised manufactories in France are well known. These were mostly enterprises manufacturing mirrors and carpets, cannon foundries (iron works in Toulon and Brest, carpet manufactories at Bovet, tapestry workshops in Paris, etc.). Moreover, in France amalgamated enterprises existed in ship-building, in glass and paper production, as well as in individual branches of the ancient textile industry. In the latter half of the 16th century printshops in France had five to seven printing presses manned by 20-25 hired workers.

[1] See V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1972, pp. 386-427.

In the Netherlands book-printing was organised in centralised manufactories as early as the 16th century. The famous printshop of Plantin in Antwerp, which had 15-22 printing presses, assumed all-European significance. In the 17th-century Republic of the United Provinces such enterprises were set up in both the new industries (sugar-refining, glass-making, cotton-printing) and in the old, textile ones. In Spain in the first half of the 16th century amalgamated workshops were known to mint coins in Seville, Granada, and Burgos. Large printshops in the German cities of Basel, Strasbourg, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Leipzig in the early 16th century were similar manufactories. The printshop in Nuremberg had 24 printing-presses and 100 hired workers. Glass manufacture in Hesse and Thuringia was also carried out in amalgamated enterprises. In the 18th century a certain enlivening of economic life was manifest, in particular, in the development of centralised manufactories in Berlin (for instance, wool-processing) and in Krefeld (silk production). At the same time, centralised enterprises sprang up in the Austrian lands proper: in Vienna (manufacture of expensive fabrics), in Linz and other cities (textile, as a rule). Towards the end of the 18th century in Northern Italy amalgamated workshops consolidated their positions in the silk, wool and flax industries, in the production of ceramics, paper and in ship-building.

Nevertheless, there were only dozens of centralised manufactories (for instance, in France under Colbert—113), whereas scattered enterprises were numbered by the hundreds. Moreover, a distinctive feature of the centralised manufactories also was the extensive use of home production, capitalist exploitation of home workers. Lenin emphasised that the latter "is met with at all stages of the development of capitalism in industry, but is most characteristic of manufacture."[1] The main workshop had ramifications to a multitude of workshops of home workers performing, as a rule, primary, preliminary operations (in the textile branches—carding and spinning). The manufactory, particularly in the villages "is ... interwoven with the conditions of life of a great mass of individuals...".[2]

Relatively large groups of workers concentrated in individual enterprises, the data on which have been presented above, were by no means distributed in exactly the same numbers between centralised shops either in an amalgamated or a mixed manufactory. It is not accidental, therefore, that in the sources and the literature we find little information on the concentration of workers in one production building. Only a part of the workers, and a much smaller part for that matter (dozens or hundreds at most) worked under one

[1] See V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 441.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 71.

roof: the printshop of Plantin had 60-100 workers; French and German printshops in the 16th century—10-20 workers; French manufactories in the latter half of the 17th century—10-100 workers; a fullery in 17th-century England—120 workers; English knitting shops in the first half of the 18th century—up to 50 hired hands. The majority of the workers (sometimes thousands, as has been pointed out above) were exactly home workers economically dependent on the main, central workshop as its appendages but retaining at the same time a semblance of independence in their home workshops.

Capitalist exploitation of home workers, that invariable characteristic of the manufactory, was based on a widely ramified network of workshops in advanced England, even in the first half of the 18th century. It formed the actual background against which larger workshops loomed more or less conspicuously. The latter predominated in the country's economic life, although numerically their proportion within the multitude of small home workshops was naturally small. Moreover, the manufactory developed in an environment of small commodity production—the "broad foundation", as Marx said, of the entire economic edifice in that epoch.[1] For instance, in France in the latter half of the 16th century the majority of printshops were small handicraft workshops with one or two printing presses. In Lyons a typical proportion was observed: 10-15 typographic manufactories for 90-100 small artisan printshops. The same proportion was characteristic of Paris.

Small workshops in city crafts and in village sideline crafts had partly preserved their small-commodity type and had partly been drawn into the capitalist orbit. It has been estimated that of the 1099 printshops which had existed in Europe in the 15th century, only 210 survived in the next century, whereas the others had closed down as their owners came to ruin. The poorest city and village craftsmen were gradually, step by step, subjugated to the capitalist entrepreneur and often turned into home workers ("simple change of form"). And conversely, successful owners of small workshops employed additional manpower and by expanding their production in this way turned into small proprietors of the petty-bourgeois kind. Such workshops had a few hired workers, not more than five, as a rule, and often even fewer.

Imagining this "broad foundation", i.e., small-commodity production, in combination with the indispensable and quantitatively tangible appendage of large-scale production—homework for the capitalist, one can fully comprehend the well-known metaphor of Marx who wrote of the manufactory as an "economic work of art".[2]

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 347.
[2] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 347.

The aforesaid suggests a conclusion of prime significance. The socialisation of labour on the basis of manufactory capitalism made a long step forward from the guild organisation of medieval crafts. On the relative historical plane, however, it had not yet attained a high level. The concentration of wage labour can be discussed seriously only as regards the centralised manufactory, which was conspicuous precisely as an "islet" in a sea of small artisan workshops. This means, in turn, that in the structural respect only an insignificant proportion of the emerging class of wage workers was concentrated in more or less sizeable industrial establishments, while the bulk of it was as yet dispersed, territorially scattered. The proletariat in the period of manufactory capitalism was mostly dissociated in the process of production, deconcentrated between small workshops, which were either of the petty-bourgeois type or constituted the "home" component of the manufactory.

The workers concentrated in the amalgamated manufactory existed under conditions which differed widely from those of the remaining mass of dissociated proletarians. It is important to emphasise the greatest development of the capitalist relations of production within it. It was precisely in the centralised manufactory that the real subordination of labour to capital was established for the first time, "the whole real image of the mode of production changes and the specifically *capitalistic mode of production* arises",[1] and along with it the corresponding relations of production between the capitalist and wage labour. The centralised manufactory is exemplified by the enterprise of a 17th-century English fullery owner. In his large workshop 120 persons were engaged: these were "partial", "detail" workers (spinners, carders, weavers, shearers, etc.). They were supervised by a superintendent, who was "very skellfull in all things apperteyninge to his trade of clothinge." The proprietor who was thoroughly familiar with the production process determined the distribution of the work force, the size and structure of the enterprise, the quantity and type of the raw materials to be used, personally hired hands, and fixed the rates and form of payment. In other words, he directly and frankly presented himself to the workers as the owner of capital and employer.[2]

In the centralised manufactory capitalist relations are so developed that they are fixed, as Lenin put it, "in sharp oppositions between the groups participating in production".[3] The gulf between the owner of the means of production at one pole and the hired workers at the

[1] The Archives of Marx and Engels, Vol. II (VII), p. 99.

[2] "Historical Manuscripts Commission. 14th Report, Appendix", pt. IV, *The Manuscripts of Lord Kenyon*, London, 1894, p. 572.

[3] See V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 543.

other pole widens to a considerable extent at such an enterprise. For the first time in the history of capitalist relations the workers as a collective body become aware of their identical working conditions. It is here that they become proletarians in the true socio-economic sense of the word. They are opposed to the capitalist directly without any illusory partitions. The division of labour, detailed, "partial" specialisation ensure intensive exploitation and the extraction of relative surplus value by the entrepreneur.

Such "pure" proletarians, however, constituted an insignificant proportion within the system of wage labour. A much more typical worker figure was a home worker or a hired worker (including apprentices) of a small workshop. In a decentralised enterprise or an industrial business of the petty-bourgeois type no real subordination of labour to capital existed. Subordination was merely formal. Capital subordinated the traditional, already existing forms of production, and the relation of formal subordination of labour to capital arose between the entrepreneur, on the one hand, and the workers, on the other, insofar as this relation, as Marx wrote,"merely *formally* differs from the earlier modes of production" and "surplus-value can be created only by way of *lengthening working time*, that is, in the form of *absolute surplus-value*".[1] Thus, with the formal subordination of labour to capital the distinctive features of the exploitation of the workers are predetermined by other methods of extracting surplus-value than those used with real subordination: with the former we have relative, and with the latter we have absolute surplus-value.

The root cause of this difference lies in the extent of the alienation of the objective and subjective conditions of work (i.e., the means of production and the means of subsistence) from the direct producer and in their opposition to him as alien property, as capital. The greater the alienation, the more complete is the formal subordination of labour to capital, which is, in turn, the precondition and basis for real subordination.

What did all this look like in historical reality? In the most developed manufactory the degree of the aforementioned alienation was almost complete, and the proletarian appeared in a relatively "pure form". In other words, he was deprived of the means of production, worked in a building and with tools owned by the entrepreneur. It was only seldom and partly that the worker retained some collateral means of subsistence, such as his home and land-holding but more commonly he lived in an outhouse of the manufactory.

A different picture shaped in the event of formal subordination of labour to capital. Here the distinctive feature of the living and

[1] The Archives of Marx and Engels, Vol. II (VII), pp. 101, 95.

working conditions of hired workers was work at home or in the employer's small workshops. Outwardly, the home workers did not differ from independent masters. In addition to their own house and workshop, they often retained possession of their tools. The availability of a land-holding enabled home workers living in a rural locality to devote some of their time to agriculture. This lent a semblance of independence to the working conditions of home workers. The principal characteristics of their economic status—their dependence on their wages, their inability to dispose of the results of their work, the absence of links between them and the market—were the direct and obvious signs of their enslavement by the employer and evidenced the illusory character of their independence. It is significant that despite their territorial dispersion and the different specialisations the home workers felt they were elements of a single mechanism. Their awareness of their dependence was augmented by the fact that the craftsmen of a village or a whole locality often used the services of one travelling agent (the so-called "rider" in Britain),[1] who collected the finished products, inspected their quality and paid wages. In the American decentralised manufactories of the colonial period a different scheme was employed. For example, an advertisement in a New York paper of May, 1766, announced "that due attendance will be given every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, in the afternoon, to give out flax and receive in yarn...."[2] In any event the home workers realised their dependence on one and the same master, submitting common petitions about the deterioration of their situation during industrial depressions and for other reasons. Their material conditions, however, were by no means identical. Part of the home workers (spinners and carders, as a rule) possessed their own tools, the others (usually weavers) were supplied with working tools by the employer. Therefore, although the economic nature of home workers was identical, the degree of their dependence varied, which determined their different pay rates (other things being equal). The material helplessness of the "independent" master and his enslavement by capital were thoroughly veiled by his work at home, the availability of his own workshop, a tiny plot of land and often working tools. Nevertheless, Marx noted that the subordination of labour to capital in the home work system was already visible quite clearly: "The difference in the *character of the relation of domination and subordination*, without reference to the mode of production itself, manifests itself most of

---

[1] *The Victoria History of the County of Suffolk*, Vol. II, London, 1907, p. 259.
[2] Richard B. Morris and William Greenleaf, *U.S.A. The History of a Nation*, Vol. I, Rand McNally and Company, Chicago, 1969, p. 159.

all where the *agricultural and home by-work* ... turns into an independent capitalist branch of labour."[1]

The relations of domination and subordination were less developed in workshops of the petty-bourgeois type. The employer and three to five hired workers entered into relations of production where the opposition between the two poles—capital and labour—was expressed as yet quite inadequately. "Neither big capital nor extensive proletarian strata as yet exist,"[2] Lenin wrote. The hired workers were often simply apprentices who had become "permanent" or trainees, while small capitalists in such artisan workshops "differed but little from the workers themselves".[3] The slightly expressed contradiction in the relations of production was veiled with "family" relations. The greater the number of workers employed by one master, the more naked and frank and the less patriarchal the relations of exploitation.

Thus, in the stage of manufactory capitalism the proletariat was characterised by dispersion, deconcentration in production. The manual tools, which formed the basis of production at that time, set a limit to the continued "perfection" of relations of production and to the deepening of the antagonism between labour and capital.

Nevertheless, in Marx's definition, the amalgamated workshop with a division of labour within it was the "perfected form" of the manufactory[4], because its organisation yielded the greatest production effect. The dependence of the workers on one another with the division of labour inside a workshop, Marx wrote, "compels each one of them to spend on his work no more than the necessary time, and thus a continuity, uniformity, regularity, order, and even intensity of labour, of quite a different kind"[5]. The workers gathered in such manufactories were put in the specifically capitalist social relations in the process of production. In this sense they can be regarded as the most progressive section of the proletariat of that period. Numerically, however, they constituted a tiny minority.

Another characteristic feature of the proletariat of that period was the different working and living conditions of its different contingents and groups. In the system of home production the "partial" workers of the manufactories differed in status substantially not only from the same "detail" workers of the centralised manufactories but also from one another (within the framework of one enterprise), because they preserved a connection, if only illusory, with property,

---

[1] The Archives of Marx and Engels, Vol. II (VII), pp. 103-04.
[2] V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 543.
[3] See the *Archives of Marx and Engels*, Vol. II (VII), p. 103.
[4] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 325.
[5] Ibid., p. 326.

which varied in kind and size from home worker to home worker. The workers employed in production of the petty-bourgeois type constituted a separate group.

Naturally, in the countries of the "second edition of serfdom" the differences in the positions of the workers in production were immeasurably greater. Here capitalist combined with feudal exploitation, the latter being based on dependence of a wide variety of hues. At the same time, the workers of the 19th-century capitalist manufactory often coexisted with factory workers. The well-known historian W. Kula justly notes that the emerging working class in the Polish lands was not yet monolithic. "The proletarianising artisan weaver in the Lodz district differed from the semi-peasant working at an iron works of the Staropolska basin; for his part, the latter differed from the worker of the mines and works of Dombrowa or Upper Silesian basins already detached from the village to a greater extent."[1]

In Russian industry from the end of the 18th century the emerging proletariat was on the whole represented by two contingents of workers. Hired workmen were peasants on quitrent and wage workers in the true sense of the word. The latter were in greater numbers in the manufacturing industries and fewer in the mining industry. The emerging proletariat in Russia included, just as in other countries, workers of petty-bourgeois enterprises, manufactories of various kinds (not only centralised but also predominantly scattered), as well as factories (from the thirties and forties of the 19th century).

Thus, the proletariat of the manufactory period was everywhere not only a deconcentrated, dissociated but also an extremely heterogeneous mass structurally. This circumstance is extremely important for understanding the essence of the new class, for an analysis of the forms of its exploitation and the class struggle in that period.

In the views on the proletariat as a social category there is a clear-cut differentiation between the Marxist position and that of the bourgeois scholars. The latter ignore the difference between the newly formed proletariat (as the main product of the Industrial Revolution) and the sections of hired workers formed into a class under manufactory capitalism. Typical of the bourgeois literature is the following interpretation of the problem (with reference to England): "The factory clothiers of the late eighteenth century have their precedents in the clothiers of the sixteenth and even fourteenth century, who set up factories and gathered servants and looms under one roof...." And further: "The Industrial Revolution, therefore, did not create any new form of industrial organisation, though it

[1] W. Kula, *Kastaltowanie sis kapitalismu w Polsce*, Warszawa, 1955, s. 114.

made the factory the predominant form."[1] Hence the thesis on the formation of the factory proletariat as early as the 14th century. The results of the industrial revolution, however, are interpreted merely as quantitative: before the revolution factories were few, after it they began to predominate. The economic aspect of this interpretation is based on the confusion of different stages in the development of capitalism—the manufactory and factory stages, of which Engels and Lenin wrote in their time.[2] Lenin called attention to the socio-political aspect of the bourgeois interpretation of the question. And today bourgeois socio-economic literature fully reveals as before its practical tendency to obliterate the very concept "class" and "to eliminate the very idea of the class struggle".[3]

THE CONDITION OF THE PROLETARIAT

Considerable differences conditioned by the heterogeneous composition of the proletariat were seen in the economic status of individual labour contingents. The workers of amalgamated manufactories working under one roof were fully aware of the oppression of this form of industrial organisation as a tool for "a refined and civilised method of exploitation".[4] Manual tools and the division of labour inside a workshop for the first time created a "partial", "detail" worker, who performed only one operation, which had not existed in the feudally organised crafts.

Watch-making in such a manufactory consisted of more than thirty special operations, needle-making—about ninety, and cloth-manufacturing—up to twenty-five. "Anarchy in social division of labour and despotism in that of the workshop" (Marx)[5] developed to the extreme the productive potentials of manual work in the interest of the entrepreneur rather than the worker and at the latter's expense for that matter. An anonymous English author wrote in the first half of the 18th century, i.e., in the hey-day, classical period of the manufactory, that the greater the division of functions in the complex manufactory between the different workers, the better and quicker the product and the smaller the loss of time and labour.[6] One may add to this: the greater the profit of the entrepreneur who extracted relative surplus value in this way.

---

[1] E. Lipson, *The Economic History of England*, op. cit. pp. 4, 85. *A Short History...*, pp. 69, 72.

[2] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 14-16; V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 454.

[3] See V. I. Lenin, "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 193.

[4] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 344.

[5] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 337.

[6] *The Advantages of the East-India Trade*, London, 1720, p. 71.

The development of productive forces in the centralised manufactory was performed by means of the physical and mental crippling of the worker doomed to monotonous, uniform activity. Adam Smith pointed out that the dexterity and skill of the worker in his speciality were achieved by dulling his mental faculties and intelligence. "But in every improved and civilised society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall...."[1] The performance of the same movements during a detailed operation made the workers look like animals. Therefore, workers of certain trades, for instance, in French printshops were given characteristic nick-names: pressers were called "bears" because their operations required great muscular strength and compositors were called "monkeys" for the deftness and quickness of movements required in their work.[2] Even before Adam Smith, A. Montchrétien, a well-known French economist of the early 17th century, who, incidentally, owned an iron-making manufactory and had a remarkable business acumen, had written as follows: "He who has managed to use this living instrument, this moving tool capable of any mastery and skill can boast that he has arranged his business in the best possible way."[3]

The well-known amalgamated manufactory of Dangel in Warsaw (the late 18th century) was described by a contemporary as follows: "In a large building and workshops on Senator Street there were various craftsmen required for making carriages: wheel-makers, blacksmiths, saddlers, varnishers, harness-makers, painters, fitters, etc. Working in a team they could make a carriage in an unusually short time."[4]

The worker of a manufactory by force of his habit to perform only one operation perfected only the ability required for a given function (dexterity, attentiveness, etc.), which led to a strict classification of workers according to their abilities. Hence another distinction of the position of the workers created by the manufactory—"a hierarchy of labour-powers, to which there corresponds a scale of wages".[5] For example, in the manufactory printshops of 16th-century France the compositors and proof-readers were paid higher wages than the workers of all other trades.

---

[1] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Vol. IV, Basil, Paris, 1801, p. 92.

[2] Paul Méllottee, *Historie Économique de l'imprimerie*, Paris, Librairie Hachette & C^ie., 1905, p. 262.

[3] A. de Montchrétien, [*Traité de l'oeconomie politique dédié en 1615*, Paris, 1889, p. 25.

[4] Quoted from: O. E. Ivanova, D. L. Pokhilevich, "The Rise in Trade and Industry. Serf and Capitalist Manufactory", *The History of Poland*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1956, p. 364 (in Russian).

[5] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 330.

In addition, such a manufactory created for the first time completely untrained workers, which had been absolutely excluded in medieval shops. The reason was that in a single centralised enterprise simple operations were inevitable. Therefore, in addition to skilled workers, who were valued extremely highly in manual production (as is evidenced by the practices of enticement of experienced craftsmen by entrepreneurs), the manufactory permitted the exploitation of even physically handicapped persons. An English manufacturer wrote in the early 17th century, "...though they be lame they may pick and free wool".[1] In the latter half of the 16th century a category of untrained labourers (alloué) appeared in French printing manufactories for the first time. The above-mentioned Montchrétien carefully discriminated in his treatise (and in practice, of course) between skilled and unskilled labour. From this followed another feature of the manufactory proletariat: the manufactory paved the road towards the industrial exploitation of women and children. "Though they be children," the same English author reasoned, "they may spin and comb wool." In Germany children were "trained to work a little" from the cradle, a fact which delighted another English author of the late 17th century.[2] In France, Colbert issued a special circular (1683) in which he demanded an increase in the number of women and children in the manufactories. The entrepreneurs regarded women's and children's labour as "more profitable", because these "inferior workers" were eligible to wages from one-half to a quarter of those paid to adult men. Children were taught to work from the age of eight years and even earlier. In one of the textile manufactories of France there worked a large number of children "including toddlers".[3]

Under the strict supervision of the employer's superintendent the workers of a centralised manufactory worked in conditions of great intensity which an early bourgeois economist called "the orderliness and regularity" of the process.[4]

The situation of the home workers who served a centralised manufactory or were workers of a decentralised or mixed manufactory was different. The distinctive working conditions of these quasi-independent workers seemed to be of a dual character. On

---

[1] Quoted from: *The Victoria History of the County of Warwick*, Vol. II, London, 1908, p. 166.

[2] *A Discourse on the Necessity of Encouraging Mechanic Industry*, London, 1690, p. 13.

[3] Y. K. Novozhilov, "The Working Conditions at the Centralised Manufactories in France in the Latter Half of the 17th Century", *Transactions of the Archangel State Pedagogical Institute*, Issue 2, 1958, pp. 104, 106 (in Russian).

[4] *The Advantages of the East-India Trade*, p. 68.

the one hand, outwardly they created the false impression of more tolerable working conditions, because of the absence of meticulous control over "home" production, the possibility to work at home, in habitual surroundings, and, on the other hand, one cannot but recall what Lenin wrote precisely about the outward aspect of this "liberal" type of exploitation: an extremely unhygienic environment, the combination of dwelling and working rooms, which turned the dwelling of home workers into a hotbed of health hazards and occupational diseases.[1] The main characteristic of the position of home workers was their dispersion. It placed them in the most unfavourable conditions in relation to the entrepreneur, enabled him to reduce their wages, and enmesh them in a web of additional fettering terms. The dispersion of home workers tremendously intensified rivalry and fomented competition among them.

The division of labour expressed in the "home" system less saliently than in the complex manufactory ensured high intensity of working efforts here too. Workers of one trade spurred on, as it were, workers of another. For the timely fulfilment of orders from their employer, who was interested in the continued interaction of all the elements of his production mechanism, home workers drew into work all members of their families, including young children. The working day was practically unlimited.

Finally, another distinction of the exploitation of home workers. Relieved of expenses on production buildings and tools (which were inescapable in a centralised enterprise), the employer was in a position either to widen or to narrow very flexibly the scale of production with an eye to the market situation. Therefore, the position of home workers was less definite, less stable and permanent than that of the workers of centralised manufactories. In Devonshire, England, the clothier Helen Maning, as it follows from the source, for many years employed 300 or 400 people depending on the market demand literally from week to week.[2]

Periods of depression were particularly distressing for the home workers. Frequently recurring stagnation in industry instantly entailed a sharp reduction in employment, primarily among home workers. For example, in the period of depressions in the first half of the 17th century in England the clothier R. Webb of Gloucestershire wound up his business and left 500 persons out of work. In 1630 in the County of Surrey, 1,400 workers—spinners, fullers, and weavers—were left without work. As the source describes it,

---

[1] See V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 443.

[2] *Acts of the Privy Council, 1621-1623*, London, 1932, p. 314.

they asked for work "with sobs and tears" lest they starve to death[1].

As pointed out above, simple capitalist co-operation was a less widespread form of organisation of industry.

In England, for example, numerous workhouses were organised in their majority precisely on this principle. Leaving aside the specifics of exploitation in the workhouses (prison conditions, etc.) we shall emphasise only some characteristic features of the workers' position within them typical of co-operation of capitalistically exploited labour. Although there was no division of labour in simple co-operation (which made it different from the manufactory), here, however, everything was also done to exploit the worker as much as possible. This goal was attained by different methods of intensifying labour: the enforcement of a fixed work quota raised with a worker's age (co-operation included children and old people), the scale of wage-rates and even inducements. Those who coped with a high quota of yarn production, as was laid down in the statute of one workhouse, were allowed at "the first time they desire it to have leave to go out one whole day".[2] Women's labour was widely used, and that of children on a still wider scale. The entrepreneurs of a workhouse in Bradford wrote with satisfaction: "Our advantage is that in the clothing business we can employ all from 7 years old to 80".[3] In the so-called hospital for the poor in Paris there worked 1,591 women and only 260 men.

A different position was occupied by workers of small workshops owned by well-to-do village craftsmen or townsmen (among the latter guild masters having their own workshops constituted a sizeable proportion for a long time, up to the early 19th century and in certain countries even longer). Two or three workers employed in such workshops usually lived with the family of the rich craftsman. The relatively patriarchal character of such relations was emphasised particularly by the fact that master himself worked along with the members of his family. Apprentices and trainees in such small capitalist workshops were used precisely as hired workers although they retained their traditional guild names. Apprenticeship in the 16th century (and even earlier) meant not so much vocational training required for work with manual tools as a channel for attracting children from poor families under the yoke of capitalist oppression. Numerous sources have brought down to us scenes of the bitter plight of apprentices cruelly exploited by their masters. An appren-

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1629-1631*, London, Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1860, p. 391.

[2] St. Sepulchre, *Workhouse Committee Minute Books, 1727-1729* (Guildhall Library, MS 3137/1).

[3] *An Account of Several Work-Houses for Employing and Maintaining the Poor*, London, 1732, p. 105.

tice was not always paid wages, and whatever sum he was eligible to was withheld until the expiry of a specified period. The terms of maintenance of the apprentice by the master stipulated in the contract remained, as a rule, unfulfilled, and the apprentices eked out a miserable existence. This explains their frequent complaints of unbearably hard work instead of learning, of corporal punishment, mutilations, and, finally, the impossibility to start a family (although the period of apprenticeship sometimes lasted for twenty years, i.e., practically until the age of 32).

West European sources contain information on apprenticeship similar to that Lenin referred to later in his analysis of the development of capitalism in Russia: "Under the general conditions of commodity economy and capitalism this gives rise to the worst forms of personal dependence and exploitation."[1] The characteristic features of the position of apprentices who worked in the "patriarchal" atmosphere of a small workshop reflected, in fact, the conditions of other hired workers in establishments of this kind, whether apprentices or workers whose status was not masked by guild names.

For all the differentiation between the positions of different sections of the proletariat and the dissimilarity of the methods of their exploitation in the manufactory period the main thing was clearly obvious—"the nature of capital remains the same in its developed as in its undeveloped form".[2]

The position of the workers also differed noticeably as a result of a number of additional factors. For example, with manual tools special significance went with the character of a craft and the branch of industry. The most valued craftsmen, in 17th-century England in particular, were carpenters, tin-smiths, glass-blowers, woodworkers, and some others (category I). Rated below them were brick-layers, colliers, stone-masons (category II). Still lower were dyers, brewers, tanners, flax weavers (category III). At the bottom level were shoe-makers, leather workers, cloth weavers, fullers, shearers, bakers, knife-makers, blacksmiths, and many others (category IV). In the County of Wiltshire the scale of wages corresponded to the categories of craft, for instance, in the following manner: workers in the first category crafts were paid what were considered high wages at the time (10-11 pence a day without board), in the second category—7-8 pence, etc. A similar differentiation was to be found in the industries of some provinces of the Austrian monarchy (Croatia, Slavonia). The artisan specialities here were divided into low-paid and profitable.

The condition of the rural workers in turn differed substantially

[1] V. I. Lenin, op. cit., Vol. 3, pp. 427-28.
[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 272.

from that of the city workers. Municipal authorities in England in the early 17th century often complained that the entrepreneurs more willingly hired home workers in the countryside than in towns because they paid them smaller wages. In the villages around Lincoln a weaver was paid 3 pence a day by a clothier, and in the city, 4 pence. The same was in the French manufactories: in the cities in the latter half of the 17th century a worker was paid 8 to 15 sous a day, and in the rural localities, from 4-5 to 8-10 sous.

In the rural localities a worker had a land-holding, as a rule, which was naturally a help to his family. At the same time, this meant to a varying degree his continued dependence on the feudal lord or a bourgeois landowner (in the Netherlands and England after the revolution). A dual form of exploitation arose. The yoke of land relations was particularly onerous in the mining industry.

The dual exploitation of workers was still more severe in the countries of late genesis of capitalism, particularly in scattered manufactories, in the conditions of capitalist employment of home workers in general. The home workers were exploited by the capitalist who posed in the image of land purchaser and distributor and at the same time they continued in their status as a squire's or state serfs. The same is true of hired workers in the mining industry. For example, at the Ural works in Russia the so-called free workers employed by the works owners remained under the sway of the landowners or the state. In Silesia the employer (often a squire) applied the full force of his feudal power to the hired worker of the serfdom period.

In the period when capital was still in the embryo the blind force of economic relations had not yet consolidated its domination over labour and, therefore, the state came to the assistance of capital. Already after the appearance of the rudimentary elements of antagonism between the entrepreneurs and the proletarians, from the 14th century in England and later in France, the Netherlands and Germany statutory acts were promulgated to lengthen the working day and fix the wage rates "reasonable" for the employers. Anti-labour legislation incorporated a series of statutes which were in force for over four centuries.

In 14th-15th-century England the working day according to statutes was to last from 5 a.m. to 7-8 p.m. in summer and from 5 a.m. until dark in winter, breakfast, lunch and dinner breaks totalling 3 hours. The statute of 1562 limited the break time to 2.5 hours in summer and 2 hours in winter, i.e., from May to September the working day lasted 11.5-12.5 hours and more due to shorter break time.[1] This law was effective in the 18th century as well.

---

[1] *The Statutes of the Realm*, Vol. II, 1495, London, 1819, pp. 586-87; ibid., Vol. IV, pt. 1, 1562-1563, London, 1819, pp. 414-22.

The wage rates were also fixed by law. In England the first statute to this effect was enacted in 1349. While the minimum length of the working day was fixed directly by state authority, the wage rates were instituted, as a rule, by local authorities, at the quarter-year sessions of justices of the peace. The above-mentioned statute of 1562 stated in detail who, when and on what principles should fix the wage rates for the workers. Justices of the peace, including interested persons from among the clothiers as well as other entrepreneurs, always abused their powers.

However, the statute of 1755, for example, specifically prescribed that tailor apprentices in London and its environs should not be paid more than 2 shillings 7.5 pence a day.

Legislative regulation of wages, which effectively served the ascending bourgeoisie of England in the period of genesis of capitalism still existed in the 18th century. Marx said ironically in this context: they "were unwilling in case of necessity to be without the weapons of the old arsenal".[1] Laws or local enactments prescribing the conditions of work were also in force in colonial America.

Similar acts were promulgated in France by the state and local authorities. A royal edict of 1539 prescribed the working day for the printers of Paris from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. It was stated in the edict that "these hours are long established". While in other industries the length of the working day varied with the season (it was shorter in winter), in the printshops the working day was always of the same duration: at night the printers worked by candlelight.[2] The weavers of Poitiers laboured from 4 a.m. to 9 p.m. and those of Lyons, worked 18 hours a day. According to an eyewitness account, a worker in Lyons workshops "began his work long before sunrise and ended it long after sunset".[3] The duration of the working day in 17th-century Holland was 12-16 hours. The working masses of capitalistically model Holland in those times "were more over-worked, poorer and more brutally oppressed than those of all the rest of Europe put together".[4] In Germany, particularly after the Thirty-Year War, laws on wage reductions were also enacted. The essence of such labour statutes was aptly described by Adam Smith: "Whenever the law has attempted to regulate the wages of workmen, it has always been rather to lower them than to raise them."[5]

Attempts on the part of government authority to interfere in the relationship between labour and capital, in favour of the latter, of course, were undertaken in Russia also, as soon as the new struc-

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 691.
[2] See M. A. Moldavskaya, op. cit., pp. 110-12.
[3] Quoted from: Y. K. Novozhilov, op. cit., p. 99.
[4] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 705-06.
[5] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry...*, op. cit., Vol. 1, Bazil, Paris, 1801, p. 204.

ture began to grow stronger. The Statute on the Relations Between the Owners of Factory Villages and Workmen Employed There for Hire was issued in 1835. A decree of 1836 on the relations between the ship-owners and the workers laid down special regulations for artels—associations whose formation was compulsory. In 1838 the government issued special decrees one of which regulated the working conditions at private gold mines in the Tomsk and Yenisei provinces, and another, at Yakovlev's manufactory in Yaroslavl. They prescribed the wage rates and the length of the working day. A number of decrees were intended to supply manpower to entrepreneurs. For this purpose, more favourable conditions were provided for the seasonal work of peasants at manufactories and works. At the end of 1811 a draft law was submitted to the government on measures to ease the migration of state peasant serfs to the mines and iron works of the Vyatka province to be employed as hired workers. It was later adopted and extended to the entire area of the mining and iron industry. A simplified order of peasants' migration was approved by the State Council in 1815. It provided for free movement of peasant seasonal workers and contributed to the growth of wage labour supply to industry. This was also the purpose of the decree of 1816, which forbade industrial entrepreneurs to purchase peasants and served thereby to increase the influx of wage workers on the labour market. The decree of 1822 gave strong impetus to the employment of wage labour in industry. In all cases the feudal state with its full might stood guard over the interests of entrepreneurs.

In consequence of the widespread capitalist exploitation of home workers, as well as hired labour in small workshops in the manufactory period it was not so much the problem of the length of the working day as that of the wage rates that assumed prime importance for the majority of proletarians. This was also true of the workers of the mining industry. Because of the specific conditions of work in this industry (absence of ventilation, etc.) the working day here was limited. It was precisely the wage rate that was the chief criterion of the economic condition of labour in that period.

Documents coming from the workers themselves often present complaints of a reduction in wages from earlier years; the workers request their former pay, because they cannot exist on their current earnings and demand a wage increase. Employers resorted to various methods of cutting wages: they entered into collusions about their rates, preserved the former terms of hire for work deserving higher pay, exacted fines, substituted cash payment by payment in kind (in particular, with stale, long rotten cloth, spoiled fish, etc.).

The trend of wages in the countries of the early genesis of capitalism during two and a half to three centuries (the 16th to the first half of the 18th century or throughout the 18th century) clearly

exhibits two large cycles. The first of them covers roughly the 16th and the first half of the 17th century. It was connected primarily with the influence of the "revolution in prices", which led to a colossal spiralling of the prices of consumer goods. Research in this field proves conclusively that the level of wages in Europe lagged far behind the rise in prices. For example, in England from 1500 to 1640 (1500=100) the correlation changed as follows:[1] while the price index between 1521-1530 and 1643-1652 rose from 113 to 331, the wage index changed from 93 to 175 over the period. The same occurred in France during the 16th century: prices grew 150 per cent, while wages increased only 25 per cent. The catastrophic decline in the workers' standards of life in that period, which contributed to the ascension of early capitalism, is admitted by the most objective scientists in the West. "Cheap labour may have aided the prosperity of industrial employers.... It meant real hunger and hardship for a substantial number of the working population," the modern historian Peter Ramsey writes, referring to 16th-century England.[2]

The next cycle was marked by more balanced price and wage trends. This is indicated by the trend of price and wage increases in England from 1643 to 1702 (1500=100):[3] the price index between 1643-1653 and 1693-1702 rose from 331 to 339, while the wage index changed from 175 to 233 over the period.

Did the wage increase mean a real improvement in the worker's life? The majority of bourgeois historians are prone to exaggerate the rise in the living standards of the proletariat in the latter half of the 17th century. In doing so they refer to a comparison of wages in the first and second cycles. On a relative plane the condition of the workers really improved due to a reduction in the former gap between the price and wage trends. In an analysis of the real situation of the workers, however, it is necessary to take into account new factors which came into play precisely at that time, primarily the origination of the modern taxation system. It was first established in the most advanced country of the 17th century—the Netherlands. A contemporary praised this system as "the best system for making the wage labourer submissive, frugal, industrious and overburdened with labour."[4]

The adverse effect of the fiscal system on the position of wage labour is also evidenced by abundant material on the history of England in the first half of the 18th century. "...I do not know any

[1] D. Felix, "Profit Inflation and Industrial Growth: The Historic Record and Contemporary Analogies."—In: *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1956, Vol. LXX, No. 3, p. 446.

[2] Peter Ramsey, *Tudor Economic Problems*, London, Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1966, p. 138.

[3] D. Felix, op. cit., p. 446.

[4] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 708.

one necessary of life, upon which we have not some tax or another ... yet to a poor labourer or manufacturer, who had not perhaps above 8d. or 1 s. a day, and himself and family to maintain out of it, every one of them must seem grievous, and always will be severely felt...", said a member of parliament in 1737[1]. The annual budget of the English worker's family of four in the period under review was roughly equal to 15 pounds sterling on the average. The list of foodstuffs and prime necessities consumed annually, which was compiled by British historians for 1725, contains (taxable goods): 3.25 bushels of malt, 1.5 pounds of sugar, 2.5 pounds of candles, 1 hundredweight of coal; the list does not include soap, leather footwear, and many other necessaries required for the life of a worker family, which were also subject to taxation of various origin (excises, duties, etc.). The salt tax alone cost the worker 4-5 shillings a year. Even if the sum of taxes on each of the other commodities was smaller (for instance, the malt tax was equal to 1 shilling 7.5 pence; on tallow candles, 2.5 pence, etc.) the considerable share of taxation in the worker family budget is obvious.[2]

The plight of the workers of France in the late 17th and the early 18th century caused by extortionate taxes was described at length by Pierre Boisguillebert, a well-known economist of that period.[3]

In the light of this factor the condition of the proletariat in the second cycle appears to be far from the radiant colours in which it is painted by many Western bourgeois historians.

The condition of the workers also depended on many other circumstances. Frequent crop failures, famines, epidemics struck in the first place at the lower classes, i.e., the wage workers and the jobless, among whom there prevailed the paupers—the social product of "primary accumulation". In England during one century (from the mid-16th to the mid-17th century) crop failures and famine occurred in the following years: 1556-1558, 1571-1574, 1587, 1595-1598, 1620-1625, 1630; in the first half of the 18th century: 1710, 1740, 1766. In France a number of years of bad harvest were observed in the first half of the 16th century alone. In 1529 the country was hit by a terrible famine. In the late 17th century famines occurred in Lyons: in 1692, 1693, 1694, 1697, and 1699.[4]

---

[1] *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, Vol. X, London, 1812, col. 143-44.

[2] E. H. Phelps Brown and Sheila V. Hopkins, "Seven Centuries of the Prices of Consumables, Compared with Builders' Wage-Rates".—In: *Essays in Economic History*, Vol. II, London, Edward Arnold (Publishers), Ltd., 1962, pp. 179-96.

[3] Pierre Boisguillebert, *Le Détail de la France, sous le règne présent*, pt. I. (s.l.), 1707.

[4] For summary data on crop failures and famines in the history of France from 1595 to 1788, see Robert Mandrou, *La France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1974, pp. 44-69.

Slumps in commerce and industry had catastrophic consequences for the workers. For example, in the capitalistically organised woollen industry of England from the 16th through the first half of the 18th century historians have revealed 15 periods of depression.[1]

According to official statistics, unemployment in England's wollen industry in the first half of the 17th century alone was characterised by the following figures: in Wiltshire in 1622, 8,000 people were out of work, in the County of Surrey in 1630—1,400, in Gloucestershire in 1633—800, etc.[2] In America of the colonial period a jobless worker was often unable to save his children from starving to death and himself from jail. In 1737 the lieutenant-governor of New York observed that many workers in the colony were "reduced to poverty from want of employ."[3]

The plight of the workers of New Jersey in the period of unemployment in 1765 alarmed even the local authorities. The workers of Philadelphia in 1707 protested against the "want of employ". The periods of depression in Lyons industry painfully affected worker families in 1627, 1629, 1632, 1649, and 1652. On the eve of the French bourgeois revolution of the late 18th century a crisis in commerce and industry played havoc with the clothing industry of Bovet: towards June 1788 only 1,422 workers out of 3,140 retained their jobs.

Frequent epidemics carried away the lives of thousands of proletarians. The plague in London in 1563-1564 took a toll of 20,000 lives, mostly of workers, of course; in 1603—30,500, in 1620-1625—35,500, in 1636-1637—10,500. The plague epidemics in France in 1564 and 1567 were equally disastrous.

In the country of the late genesis of capitalism the situation of the workers was aggravated by the long reign of serfdom. It profoundly affected the conditions of work not only of proletarians working under coercion but also of wage labour, the capitalistically exploited workmen, by conserving various kinds of feudal and semi-feudal forms of employment.

Documents coming from representatives of the ruling classes (who in this case can by no means be suspected of exaggeration) present horrifying scenes of the labour of workers in Russia. The

[1] T. S. Ashton, *Economic Fluctuations in England, 1700-1800*, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1959, p. 136; G. D. Ramsay, *The Wiltshire Woollen Industry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., London, 1965, pp. 65-69.

[2] *Calendar of State Papers. Domestic Series, 1619-1623*, London, 1858, p. 382. Op. cit., 1629-1631, p. 391.

[3] Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*. Vol. I: *From Colonial Times to the Founding of the American Federation of Labor*, International Publishers, New York, 1962, p. 25.

Governor-General of Western Siberia, P. D. Gorchakov, in 1837 had to investigate the abuses of gold-mine owners and admitted the justice of miners' complaints. In 1835 the Minister of Finance E. F. Kankrin submitted to the tzar a memorandum which was a "reprimand to the Moscow factory owners". He stated that the workers lived and worked on the same factory premises, men and women slept together, young children were exhausted by a much too long working day, payments in kind were made in the form of stale, spoiled food. Gold-mine owners entered into collusions with local authorities for unobstructed exploitation of labour.

Even where the workers were not serfs but were regarded as "free" sellers of their labour power (for instance, in the city workshops of a number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe), their situation was far from being easy. In the cities of Hungary the working day of apprentices lasted 15 hours, and in one of the manufactories of Pest, 16 hours. In Czechia the working day was usually 16 hours. Night work was a matter of course. Children of 7 to 12 worked for 12 hours at a stretch. Corporal punishment was common practice. In Poland manufactory owners arbitrarily refused to pay wages, and held hired workers against their will after the expiry of the labour contract.

A brief survey of the condition of labour in the formative period of the proletariat in the countries of the early genesis of capitalism reveals definite trends. The former patriarchal conditions of work of the direct producers in the classical period of the feudally organised crafts had receded into the past. True, the manual tools made the manufactory look like a medieval guild. In the process of production, however, the social relations underwent substantial changes. The new, capitalist form of exploitation came to the foreground. In the late 18th century, Jonathan Boucher, a Maryland clergyman, rightly observed that "both employers and the employed ... no longer live together with anything like attachment and cordiality on either side...".[1] The new form of exploitation had already struck root and was in a process of evolution. In the countries of the late genesis of capitalism, however, it had not yet become consolidated, having in mind its proportion, although in the first half of the 19th century it had demonstrated there, almost everywhere, its promising potentialities and its advantages over compulsory labour. Quite different from feudal exploitation, capitalist exploitation radically changed the condition of the worker and lent the conditions of his work and life features uncharacteristic of the position of the medieval crafts-

[1] Jonathan Boucher, "A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution", London, 1797, p. 309—In: Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement...*, op. cit., p. 69.

man. Already in the epoch of manufactory capitalism the new form of exploitation revealed its cruel nature. However, it was still in the period of its youth. Its maturity had yet to be attained. And it did arrive only in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, in the stage of machine-factory capitalism.

In bourgeois historiography many attempts have been made to justify the exploitation of labour in the period of the genesis of capitalism. The position of the entrepreneur is vindicated with this object in mind. The employer allegedly "received a larger share of the profits as compensation for the risks of finding a market for the products", he held the position of a "captain of industry" because "he was responsible, in fact, for the whole series of processes... he bought the raw material and he sold the finished product".[1] This is what one can read in the literature. The idea is promulgated to the effect that capitalist production from the very outset was organised on a principle of parity, which later gave the entrepreneur advantages accruing from his special mission. Hence the explanation of the different positions of labour and capital in production and the emphasis on the "beneficial" role of the employer.

Apology for entrepreneurship in the epoch of early capitalism had also been present in earlier studies criticised by Marx. Disproving the argument of bourgeois scholars who justified capitalist exploitation by references to business risk, Marx wrote: "If in capitalist production this risk falls to the capitalist it happens only because he had usurped the means of production."[2] Apology similar to that criticised by Marx keynotes the majority of works by modern bourgeois scholars.[3] Persistent reiteration of this thesis, however, has failed to lend it more veracity.

LABOUR STRUGGLE AGAINST EXPLOITATION

"The contest between the capitalist and the wage-labourer," Marx pointed out, "dates back to the very origin of capital."[4] The first elements of the new antagonism became manifest in the actions of the proletarians against their masters as early as the 14th and 15th centuries. The social enmity between the entrepreneurs and the workers heralded the dawn of the capitalist era in Italy. In Florence in 1345 a wool comber attempted to organise a union of

[1] E. Lipson, *The History of the Woollen and Worsted Industries*, A. & C. Black, Ltd., London, 1921, p. 41.

[2] The Archives of Marx and Engels, Vol. II (VII), p. 27.

[3] See M. A. Barg, "Problems of the Genesis of Capitalism in Modern Bourgeois Historiography".—In: *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, 1969, No. 1, pp. 112-25.

[4] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 402.

wage labourers. For this he was condemned to death. In protest the workers left the workshops of their masters. In 1371 the workers revolted in Perugia and Siena. In 1378 the famous uprising of the Ciompi flared up in Florence. An analysis of the programmes and plans of actions of the Ciompi shows that the level of their political awareness was high for the 14th century. Demanding a wage raise they claimed at the same time political rights and an organised form of political power of wage labour. In this sense the uprising of the Ciompi was a remarkable phenomenon in the period of the origination of early capitalist relations.

Through the manufactory stage of capitalism proper (16th-18th centuries) the struggle of the workers, as Marx stated, truly "raged". The employers and the workers are unhappily at constant war with one another, complained an 18th-century English economist, who, incidentally, was quite sympathetic to the workers. The above-mentioned Jonathan Boucher wrote: "The labouring classes, instead of regarding the rich as their guardians, patrons, and benefactors, now look on them as so many over-grown colossuses whom it is no demerit in them to wrong."[1]

Boisguillebert also expressed himself quite definitely on this question: "Just as nothing in the Universe can be brought up to perfection, similarly the interests of the worker and the entrepreneur cannot coincide."[2]

The most widespread active form of labour struggle were strikes, although there were riots and even uprisings. The workers also resorted to passive resistance: escape, manufacturing of commodities by "fraudulent" means, etc.

The skilled workers of centralised manufactories showed the greatest unity and organisation in struggle. In Lyons in 1501 printers threatened to down tools if their employer refused to raise their wages. This is one of the earliest if not the first authentic report of a protest by French workers. The first stubborn and long-lasting strike of this vanguard contingent of the manufactory proletariat in 1539 continued for five months. The main demands of the Lyons printers were as follows: a wage increase, better meals (part of their earnings were paid in kind), a change in the work schedule (more even distribution of working time, since they had to work 17-18 hours a day during the greater part of the year and idle for about one-third of the year because of the church holidays), and, finally, a restriction on the employment of apprentices, who worked

[1] Jonathan Boucher, "A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution", London, 1797.—In: Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement...*, op. cit., p. 69.

[2] P. Boisguillebert, *Le Détail de la France, sous le règne présent*, pt. I, 1707, p. 236.

almost unpaid, ousting skilled printers. The latter evidenced the spirit of competition among workers. The Paris printers also went on strike at that time, presenting similar demands. It should be pointed out that the strikes of bakery and butchery workers in Paris concurrent with the printers' strike did not merge into a common cause.

Lyons and Paris printers also went on strike in 1540-1541 and in 1570-1572. A century later the French economist Boisguillebert repeatedly referred in his principal work to the "spirit of rebellion" which prevailed among the workers and worried him. In the economically developed cities, he wrote, "seven to eight hundred workers of one industry suddenly and simultaneously leave their jobs because their daily wage was to be reduced by one sou."[1] In 1688 the striking workers of a paper manufactory in Amber put forward demands typical of united labour: a shorter working day, better meals, no arbitrary dismissals, etc. The workers of London's arms manufactories waged organised strike struggles. In 1640 their owners received an urgent order for 1,000 muskets. The workers refused to begin work until their demand for a wage increase was met.

In a situation of stagnation and decline in the industry of the Netherlands in the 18th century the workers of centralised manufactories showed the best fighting spirit. They were capable of putting up collective resistance. Indeed, clothing industry and shipyard workers organised a series of strikes (1718-1719). The strike of 1729 ended in the conclusion of a collective bargaining agreement between the workers and the entrepreneurs. This was evidently one of the first documents of its kind in the history of labour struggle.

The same phenomena are traceable in the area of the late genesis of capitalism. The best organised contingent of the proletariat of Hungary in the first half of the 19th century were the printers, who were also united by the conditions of their work. In May 1848 it was the printshop workers who achieved the conclusion of the first collective bargaining agreement in the history of proletarian struggle in Hungary. In Czechia the pioneers of proletarian struggle were the textile workers. In 1832 the workers of the amalgamated print works of Brandeis downed their tools in protest against their low wages. That was one of the first strikes in the Czech lands.

In Russia the main foci of the most stubborn labour struggle were the Moscow industrial region with its centralised manufactories and the mining and metallurgical region of the Ural works where unrest, among wage labourers in particular, had the most massive and protracted character. The organised struggle of the workers of Yakovlev's manufactory in Yaroslavl went down in history. The constant

[1] P. Boisguillebert, *Le Détail de la France...*, pp. 267, 268.

disturbances during the first few decades of the 19th century among the miners of the Revda, Ufalei, Sysert, and Polevsky works in the Urals, as well as the struggle of wage labourers at privately owned gold-mines in the Tomsk and Yenisei provinces and other mines compelled the management and the government to take special steps to lay down the working conditions for the proletariat. There was frequent and violent unrest among hired ship hands and builders. Purely proletarian demands (for wage increase, a shorter working day) were a new motive for labour actions in the late 18th and in the early decades of the 19th century.

The struggle of home workers was, as a rule, of a massive character everywhere. In Colchester (England) in April and May 1637 about 500 workmen who worked at home for the city's richest entrepreneur, the clothier T. Reynolds, complained of their low wages and payments in kind. After repeated futile petitions to the city mayor, justices of the peace and, finally, to the Privy Council the workers burned down part of their master's house together with the stock of commodities stored there. The damage ran into 500 pounds sterling. Apprehensive of a spread of the struggle the authorities ordered the clothier to end his arbitrary practices and pay the workers the wages fixed by law.

In 1627 a large number of home workers rioted in Lancashire. This was caused by the abuses of an official who inspected the quality of cloth. He had unfairly rejected part of the finished product, with the result that the piece wages of the workers were reduced. In Darnetalle near Rouen in 1697 three to four thousand clothing home workers continued a stubborn struggle during a month.

Apprentices usually acted as an isolated group. In the city of Worcester (England) in 1619 they went on strike in support of their demand for higher wages. The struggle evidently assumed a bitter character: the bishop had to interfere in the conflict. Frightened by the staunchness of the strikers, he advised the employers to raise their wages. In the twenties of the 17th century a demand for a wage increase was voiced by apprentices of Coventry. Actions by apprentices are also known in the history of France. In 1688 band-maker apprentices of Paris struggled for higher wages. In the same year clothier apprentices in Rouen demanded the dismissal of low-paid and foreign workers (the spirit of competition and ethnic strife!).

In Hungary in the early 19th century there were strikes of cobbler and stone-mason apprentices in Pest in 1802 and 1807 respectively. In the 1830s shoe-maker apprentices went on strike there. In 1835-1836 more than 600 workers put forward a demand for an improvement of their housing and living conditions, as well as (which is curious!) an improvement in the production, a return to the pat-

riarchal relations which had prevailed at one time in the classical workshops of the Middle Ages.

Junior apprentices, one of the most destitute groups of the proletariat of that period ("limited bondage, called apprenticeship", as one historian put it)[1] also acted in isolation, as a rule. They expressed their protest against exploitation and the hard conditions of life in unrest and riots, information on which is plentiful. Strikes of junior apprentices also occurred. In the city of Norwich, England, in 1610 one hundred junior apprentices employed in weavers' workshops went on strike in protest against inviting new workers to the workshops whom they regarded as their competitors. The strike grew to a considerable size, involving workers of the city environs. The strikers' resistance, however, was soon put down, and many of them were imprisoned. Big riots of junior apprentices took place in 1617 in Middlesex, mostly in the environs of London. A statement issued by the government said that the rioting and rebellion had caused enormous harm to the peace and tranquillity in the country. Masters were prescribed not to give the workmen any reason for discontent and strictly watch them to prevent their gatherings in their leisure time. Matters went so far that the Privy Council alerted armed forces.[2] Similar riots occurred in 1624. In view of this, the government issued recommendations repeated in 1625 and 1626 which provided for the maintenance of 800 armed men to frighten the workers. In 1633 junior apprentices revolted at the manufactory of the entrepreneur C. Reesley, in Newcastle. They were joined by workers of other enterprises. The rebels armed with improvised weapons offered resistance to the city home guard led by the mayor, freed their arrested comrades and partly destroyed their master's house and enterprise. The rebellion was suppressed only when armed forces arrived from other cities to assist the authorities.

The passive protest against low wages was expressed in a variety of forms. For instance, spinners who worked at home for piece wages overstated the weight of yarn moistening it with oil or water. In 18th-century colonial America newspapers published announcements about fugitive workers (so widespread was this form of passive resistance). In such cases the fugitives were hunted and severely punished whenever caught. In Germany in the early 18th century workers abandoned cities en masse. French workers emigrated to Germany and Catalonia. It is indicative that the law of 1739 forbidding emigration from France was motivated by the reluctance to allow production skills to spread to workers of other countries. The emigration of French workers continued in later decades as well.

---

[1] Anthony Bimba, *The History of the American Working Class*, New York, International Publishers, 1927, p. 34.

[2] *Acts of the Privy Council, 1617-1619*, London, 1929, p. 38.

In the Polish lands fugitive workers were stubbornly hunted, returned to their master and cruelly punished. In Russian capitalist manufactories the workers resorted to such passive forms of protest against their hard living conditions as disobedience, grievances submitted by workers to the management through their representatives delegated for talks, frequent escapes. For example, in 1833 seventy-eight workers escaped from the gold-mines of Ryazanov and Balandin, and about 500 from Popov's.

An analysis of the demands of proletarians fully confirms Marx's conclusion concerning the great significance of the contests "about wages" in that period.[1]

The first attempts of industrial entrepreneurs to use machines in manufactories also came up against labour resistance. The workers expressed their protest against exploitation by crippling manufacturing equipment. In England in the first half of the 17th century the workers opposed, for instance, the introduction of machines to manufacture needles and of wind-driven saw mills. In another case workers destroyed a limestone kiln. In 1758 an attempt to install the first shearing machine provoked unrest among thousands of workers. In the 17th century there were protests in many European countries against the use of band- and lace-weaving looms. The riots of band- and lace-makers in Danzig, Leiden, Cologne, and Hamburg resulted in an official ban on these machines. Because of "the hostility of the workers" of Lyons in the 18th century a loom for making lacework fabrics invented by Vaucanson found no application.[2]

Labour disturbances often flared up because of unemployment. The city of Newcastle in England was more than once a scene of the struggle of miners and seamen, who were out of work due to stoppages in the seaborne coal trade. In the twenties of the 17th century England was swept by a wave of protests of woollen industry workers. It was caused by unemployment in the wake of a depression. In the cloth-producing counties the jobless joined in units, demanding bread and money from the rich, capturing food transports and raiding markets.

While taking part in open protest actions, the workers at the same time tended to associate in unions for defence of their interests. The acts of the Lyons consulate for 1534-1536 mention an attempt by stone-masons, carpenters and day-labourers to unite in the interest of increasing their wages. Typical in this respect were the brotherhoods of apprentices resting on the traditions of the disintegrated guild system. Such brotherhoods were widespread in England.

---

[1] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 404.

[2] F. V. Potemkin, *The Industrial Revolution in France*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1971, p. 105 (in Russian).

The earliest report of a labour union in the colonial period of the USA dates back to 1684. This was the draymen's union of New York. In 1763, as it was officially announced, black chimney sweepers in Charleston "had the insolence, by a combination amongst themselves, to raise the usual prices, and to refuse doing their work unless their exorbitant demands are complied with". In 1770 the coopers of New York associated in a union. In 1778 the journeymen printers in New York combined and demanded an increase in wages. They sent a letter to their employers informing them that "as the necessaries of life are raised to such enormous prices, it cannot be expected that we should continue to work at the wages now given...."[1] In the nineties of the 18th century the majority of labour unions in the United States were mutual aid associations. Later trade unions began to take shape, which was facilitated by the experience of European immigrant workers.

In France, "companionages"—mutual aid and labour struggle associations—existed almost in all industries and operated actively in periods of preparations for and during strikes. The "companionages" of the Lyons and Paris printers were organised in a military fashion and had elected leaders—captains and lieutenants. They had a common fund and they held secret assemblies. In 17th-century Holland there were brotherhoods of journeymen and manufactory workers' unions. In Germany journeymen's unions organised strikes and boycotts in the early 18th century. In Italy in the latter half of the 18th century workers united in societies—brotherhoods—whose tasks included preparations for strikes. Associations of journeymen were set up in the Austrian monarchy as well.

In England, labour coalitions, just as strikes, were banned as far back as the 14th century. Numerous repetitions of this ban throughout the manufactory period evidenced that the unions continued to exist and struggle. In the colonial period of US history the legislatures of some states passed laws directed against labour mutual aid associations in the latter half of the 18th century. Here, however, the entrepreneurs were aided in the first place not by drastic laws against association of proletarians but by the courts, which regarded labour unions as illegal conspiracies in the event of a conflict between labour and capital. In France an ordinance issued in Villers-Cotierêts in 1539 banned labour organisations and brotherhoods of craftsmen of any trade throughout the country. That was the first anti-labour law adopted in France. Nevertheless, legislation directed against labour unions and strikes was later repeated many times, which evidenced their viability. A stringent ban on labour organisation was

[1] Ph. S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, New York, 1972, Vol. I, pp. 69-70.

enacted in the Czech lands as well. The law of 1803 envisaged six months' imprisonment for participation in a proletarian union.

The entrepreneurs set up their own unions for struggle against labour strikes. Such a union was formed, for instance, by the clothiers in the Netherlands in 1637. The American state judiciary encouraged employers' associations to be founded in opposition to labour. In 1758 the ship merchants of New York united to reduce the wages of their workers. Six years later a general association of entrepreneurs of this entire colony was founded. Moreover, the entrepreneurs required workers to submit letters of recommendation from their former employers. In France industrial entrepreneurs practised the issue to workers of references attesting their loyalty.

For all that no proletarian class movement in the true sense of the word existed at that time, because the working class itself had not yet formed. Even when labour struggle took the form of open protest it could not be regarded as a working-class movement. As Marx said, in the manufactory period the struggle of the proletariat "is latent or manifests itself only in isolated and sporadic phenomena".[1] Strikes, as Lenin noted, expressed "the class struggle in embryo, but only in embryo".[2]

Labour protests were spontaneous in the sense that the strikers failed to display an awareness of the socio-economic antagonism between the interests of the workers and the employers. This conclusion is valid also for the struggle of the manufactory workers, i.e., workers of the most developed enterprises where the antagonism between labour and capital became clearly manifest for the first time. The protest actions of such workers reflected the really existing antagonism only spontaneously. Marx underscored that "the contests about wages in manufacture pre-suppose manufacture, and are in no sense directed against its existence".[3] Needless to say, class awareness was absent also in the struggle of those workers who were exploited by the small capitalists, because in their workshops the antagonism between labour and capital had not yet become obvious.

The proletarians waged their struggle in a situation of their division into "worker grades" which was attributable to the heterogeneity of the composition and the hierarchic structure of wage labourers. Sometimes, however, proletarians of different "grades" united for joint actions, but more commonly this did not happen. The rivalry between workers was quite stiff, whether they belonged to separate groups employed in one workshop (master craftsmen

[1] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 24.
[2] See V. I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 375.
[3] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 404.

and apprentices) or old-timers and newcomers, etc. In addition, there was competition between workers of different nationalities, which was actively encouraged and fomented by the bourgeoisie (German and Croatian workers; Slovaks, Hungarians, Czechs and workers of other nationalities oppressed by the Habsburg monarchy; Polish and German workers in Prussia, English and Irish workers). Marx also pointed out the existence of competition between the labour of women and children, on the one hand, and that of men, on the other.[1]

Labour protests in the manufactory period were mostly spontaneous in form as well. They were provoked by concrete abuses on the part of employers and were directed precisely against these abuses. It is only in this sense that one may speak of a labour action "programme" in relation to that time. Whenever a protest action had been preceded by preparations they usually took the form of a conspiracy. Even in relatively stubborn and long-lasting uprisings the workers who had revolted were guided and advised by their spontaneous sentiments. Their actions were characterised by narrow localisation and dissociation and never spread beyond one district or a few cities.

All this, of course, gives no reason to belittle the progressive significance of labour struggle in the early period of capitalism. This significance is determined not only by immediate positive results of joint actions of proletarians, by the fact that the actions of their individual groups, even the smallest ones, often ended in victory, and the workers improved for a time their economic condition. The main thing is that labour resistance erected a barrier to continued intensification of their exploitation, and this is the intransient meaning of labour struggle even in its early stages.

Analysing labour resistance to capitalist exploitation in the manufactory period, it is necessary to bear in mind the following cardinal feature of this period. Manual tools were still the basis for capitalist production. Therefore, complete realisation of all its properties, including full subordination of labour to capital, was not yet feasible. The machine basis of technology required for this was still non-existent. The entrepreneurs were unable to enslave the workers completely, because the employers themselves and their production depended on the skilful craftsman. "Capital is constantly compelled to wrestle with the insubordination of the workmen", "there runs the complaint of want of discipline among the workmen"[2]—such is the root cause of the peculiar conditions of labour struggle in the manufactory stage.

---

[1] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 346.
[2] Ibid., pp. 346-47.

The specifics of labour resistance to capital in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe were determined by the long reign of serfdom and after its abolition by the preservation of numerous survivals of feudal bondage, which were very acutely felt by the workers. For this reason labour struggle here often had a "conservative" colour: it was directed against the conversion of the peasant into a factory wage labourer. Wage labour was based in the final analysis also on coercion, and capitalist exploitation at a manufactory or a workshop made the life of the peasant of yesterday by no means easier. In many protest actions of wage labourers, for example, in Russia, this factor, nostalgia of its own kind, was present invariably. To break out of the situation of arduous wage labour and return to the land was a motive behind many labour riots. The main line of labour struggle, however, was indisputably progressive, although it was very distinctive from the struggle waged by the workers in Western Europe. Documents narrating of the struggle of the Russian workers contain more information about disturbances in protest against the yoke of serfdom and feudalism than about protests against purely capitalist oppression. The system of serfdom continued to inflict painful blows to the labourer, even if he worked for hire. Under the more or less thick veil of serfdom, right up to the reform of 1861, the masses of direct producers, both serfs and wage labourers, were united by their common position in relation to their main feudal oppressor, and therefore, the struggle of all labourers merged, as a rule, into a common cause and brought peasant serfs and wage labourers closer together.

LABOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE ANTI-FEUDAL MOVEMENTS

Throughout the history of early capitalism purely proletarian economic battles merged into a common struggle of the popular masses against feudalism and reaction. "In every great bourgeois movement," Engels pointed out, "there were independent outbursts of that class which was the forerunner, more or less developed, of the modern proletariat."[1]

Already in the late feudal society of Western Europe, in the conditions of sporadic emergence of wage labour, proletarians invariably took part in anti-feudal struggle. This was particularly manifest in Italy in the 14th and 15th centuries. Here cities opposed the tyranny of feudal power single-handedly. The dramatic pages of the history of the protests of the population in the Italian city communes against the arbitrary rule of the feudal lords cannot be reproduced if one ignores the role played by the first capitalistically exploited

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970, p. 116.

workers in the common movement of the people. The significance of the city in medieval Italy was extremely great: feudalism had been undermined here to a definite extent, as Marx wrote, it "has... been broken down by exceptional urban development".[1] During massive uprisings (in the cities of Siena, Perugia, Florence), "fat popolans", i.e., entrepreneurs and other propertied citizens, turned the resentment of wage labourers to their own advantage. The proletarians were becoming an increasingly important factor in the political life of the city-states and often decided the outcome of developments. Already at that time they were struggling for the idea of general equality, if only in the most primitive and Utopian form, the equality of all citizens without differentiation into the poor and the rich.[2]

The riots of miners in the quarries of the mountains in Saxony from the 15th century "assumed the character of anti-feudal protests although they included protests against capitalist exploitation".[3]

The events during the Münster commune (Westphalia) will forever remain in the history of the people's liberation struggle. The new government set up in the struggle against the city's feudal seigneur and bishop, Prince Franz von Waldeck, which ruled the city from February 1534 to June 1535 was based on the armed strength of the lower classes, primarily the working people. The struggle had ostensibly religious motives, but its root cause was social, as was evidenced by the egalitarian measures of the commune (obligatory work by all for the common weal, collectivisation of food stocks, confiscation of church and monastery property for the use of the people, and many other reforms). The anti-feudal struggle combined with vaguely expressed egalitarian communistic aspirations, which could be entertained only by proletarian elements of the Münster commune.

Protest actions by workers of the manufactory period which merged into the common torrent of the anti-feudal struggle were veiled, as a rule, in a religious integument and directed against the dominant church.

A massive workers' and peasants' uprising broke out in the area of the salt mines in Salzkammergut, Upper Austria, and lasted from July 1601 to January 1602. The religious (Protestant) aspect of this uprising was deeply rooted in the profound resentment of the people against feudal and capitalist exploitation (as was evidenced by the

---

[1] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 801.

[2] V. I. Rutenburg, Early Capitalism. The City Uprisings in the 14th and 15th Centuries"; *The History of Italy*, Vol. I, p. 282, etc. (in Russian).

[3] M. M. Smirin, *The History of Early Capitalism in the German Lands (15th-16th Centuries)*, Moscow, 1969, p. 326 (in Russian).

workmen's demand for higher wages). The insurgents armed themselves, put the salt works out of action and stubbornly fought to implement their anti-feudal, religious and economic demands until their defeat by government forces. The uprising of the people, including the workers, in London in May 1640 was frankly directed against the Anglican Church and the Archbishop of Canterbury. In October of the same year in the English city of Sadbury there was a similar, outwardly religious protest action by workers—weaver apprentices and other "villains", as it was stated in a report to the government.[1]

In England's North American colonies massive popular revolts, with workers taking part, against the oligarchic administration and colonialism took place in Boston in 1688-1689 and in New York in 1688.

In 18th-century Sweden unrest, strikes and revolts of manufactory workers often combined with peasant uprisings. The uprising in Dalarna Province in 1743, which went down in history under the name of the "Great Dalarna Dance", united workers and miners of iron works: both hated the nobility, mine owners and representatives of the bureaucracy. An 8,000-strong armed force advanced on Stockholm so as "to shake the wigs of the nobles". The poorest sections of the city population welcomed the insurgents. The latter advanced political demands, declaring: "We want to dethrone and elect the King in accordance with our rights and law."[2] The uprising was cruelly suppressed.

In June 1789, in a situation of general political unrest, the workers of Lyons turned out in force against the feudal absolutist authorities, seized the Hôtel de Ville for a short time and hoisted a red banner over it.

The wage labourers of Russia inscribed a vivid page in the history of the joint struggle of the workers and peasants against feudalism. As a noticeable social stratum they came on the scene in the 17th century. That was the time of the first manifestations of their activity, which became especially intensive in the 18th century. Of immense interest in this context are the peasant wars of the 17th and 18th centuries, which were a variety of civil wars.[3]

In the peasant war of 1606-1607 wage labourers did not yet play a major role. However, already in the second peasant war of 1667-1671 under the leadership of S. T. Razin, the peasant serfs, who were the main force of the movement, were joined by numerous plebeian

[1] *Calendar of State Papers. Domestic Series, 1640-1641*, London, 1882, p. 195.

[2] Quoted from: G. A. Nekrasov, "The Socio-Agrarian System in the First Half of the 18th Century", *The History of Sweden*, Moscow, 1974, pp. 293-94 (in Russian).

[3] See V. I. Lenin, "Socialism and War", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 299.

elements of the cities, wage labourers of local industries and the water transport, vagrants, etc.[1]

The very first march of Razin's detachment on the Volga attracted 160 volunteers from among wage labourers and vagrants. The tzarist government ordered "strong checkpoints to be set up" to prevent the infiltration of volunteers to Razin's insurgent forces. Nevertheless, during Razin's march along the Volga the insurgent army grew to 10,000 men, including wage labourers and later continued to swell due to the influx of such volunteers.

Razin's forces were joined by wage labourers of Astrakhan's salt works and of many other cities. By the time the insurgent army reached Saratov it had been reinforced mostly with vagrants of the Volga valley working at salt mines and by barge haulers of various origin.

When during the siege of Simbirsk there was a shortage of weapons and Razin declared mobilisation of blacksmiths and carpenters hundreds of wage labourers and poor people from towns came to the assistance of the insurgents. They worked day and night, and, as eyewitnesses testified, the glow over the smithies illuminated the city environs like the blaze of fires. The workers of the tzar's salt works at the Tersky Lakes, the Slobodskaya Ukraine, enthusiastically joined the insurgents. Moreover, the plebeian sections of the urban population and wage labourers willingly responded to Razin's appeals for action[2] and assisted the insurgents by various means in the taking of Astrakhan, Tsaritsyn, Saratov, Simbirsk, Penza, and other cities.

Wage labourers showed greater activity in the Third Peasant War of 1707-1708 under the leadership of K. Bulavin: in that period capitalist relations were more and more firmly striking root in the country. Thousands of labourers worked in the areas of the uprising. Spinners, carpenters, scutchers were sent from all parts of Russia to the coast of the Sea of Azov, where a fleet was being built, to procure timber for ships, to process hemp and make ropes. Towards 1701 up to 15,000 workers were employed at the Voronezh shipyards,

[1] See L. V. Cherepnin, "On the Study of the Peasant Wars in Russia in the 17th and 18th Centuries. (The Theory of the Problem)", *The Peasant Wars in Russia in the 17th-18th Centuries: Problems, Quests, Solutions*, Moscow, 1974, p. 13. It is necessary to emphasise that because of the diversity of terminology it is difficult to identify wage labourers in the true sense of the word. This refers to the Razin and later peasant wars. More definite estimates are available only for some Ural works. For example, at the time of the Pugachev uprising wage labourers accounted roughly for one-third of the work force at the Satkinsky works. (M. N. Martynov, "The Satkinsky Works at the Time of the Uprising Led by Yemelyan Pugachev", *Historical Notes*, Vol. 58, Moscow, 1956, p. 243 (in Russian).

[2] See *The Peasant War Under the Leadership of Stepan Razin*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1959, p. 65 (in Russian).

and 7,569 labourers and craftsmen were building the Taganrog harbour. Between 1704 and 1707 26 to 37 thousand workers were annually brought forcibly to the Azov and Troitsk building sites. During the reign of Peter the Great the Alapayevsk and other works of defence importance were expanded: here workmen "mined ores, burned wood to charcoal, and carried firewood". Many labourers and vagrants were hired to work on ships and at fisheries in Astrakhan. In the area of the Northern Donets labourers were exploited at salt mines, and procured timber along the river Khoper. When Bulavin was mustering his insurgent forces wage labourers flocked to his units from all these localities (for instance, up to 10,000 workmen rafting timber on the Khoper). In the course of the uprising Bulavin reposed great hopes in the labourers, and they were justified. For example, in September 1708 a regiment of tzarist troops guarding a transport of arms and ammunition intended for suppression of the uprising was accompanied by about 1,200 labourers. All of them joined the insurgents. Five hundred labourers procuring bast in the Khoper area followed suit.

Wage labourers from the midst of the lower classes of Tsaritsyn, Dmitriyevsk, Borisoglebsk and other towns were quite numerous in the ranks of the insurgents. They gave material aid to Bulavin's forces, and supplied valuable information on the strength and plans of punitive troops.

The Great Peasant War of 1773-1775 under the leadership of Y. I. Pugachev was the best organised, ideologically mature and gigantic in scale. It broke out in the period of consolidation of the capitalist structure and disintegration of the system of feudalism and serfdom. Therefore, the workers played a much more conspicuous part in it than in the earlier uprisings.

It was for the first time that the workers of the Ural and other works were so active as they were among the insurgents led by Pugachev—a circumstance which outlined a perspective of immense historic importance, since the spread of unrest to a large number of works laid a definite basis for unification of the insurgent forces.[1] Pugachev and his associates appealed to factory hands with special messages, promising them deliverance from exhausting work and various burdens and abuses ("such that have never been and do not exist even in exile", as workmen complained.)[2]

In the course of the struggle the insurgents drew up a remarkable document, which was in effect their political programme for the Ural works. "This appeal," a Soviet historian says, "is distinguished by a broad outlook far from purely local or narrow group interests.

[1] See L. V. Cherepnin, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

[2] Quoted from: *The Peasant War in Russia in 1773-1775. The Uprising of Pugachev*, Vol. II, Leningrad, p. 247 (in Russian).

It covers the common national interests close to the factory hands and peasants. It is pervaded by the idea that all Russia is enslaved and exhausted by the nobility and factory owners. Liberation of Russia from the 'yoke of work' and her prosperity are now turning from a distant dream into the immediate task of the day. The messengers of God's will on earth are 'poor people'...."[1]

Workmen circulated Pugachev's manifestos, translated them into the different languages of the insurgents (Bashkirs, Tatars, and others). The peasants of the Trans-Urals in anticipation of Pugachev's arrival joined forces with the workmen of the Ukovsky distillery. "How we wish our protector Pugachev came, so all of us could go into his service," they said hopefully.[2] They called on others to join the insurgents. All workmen of the Zlatoust works enlisted in the insurgent army. "All peasants declared the same desire as the workmen."[3] In the Chelyabinsk district the workmen of the Satkinsky works sent a delegation to Pugachev's forces and pioneered a mass coming over of the working people of that locality to the side of the insurgents. "Local peasants and workmen met and received an insurgent unit without obstruction."[4] The workmen handed over to Pugachev's forces 12 cannon, 250 muskets, 5 poods (one pood = 16 kg.—*Tr.*) of gunpowder, and elected their own ataman (leader) and esauls (officers), confiscated the works cash-box, raided the owner's house and arrested the superintendent. Similar revolts of workmen took place at the Zlatoust, Kyshtym, Kaslin, Nyaze-Petrovsky and other works. During the uprising documents enslaving workmen were burned in the factory offices. For instance, at the Beloretsk works the insurgents "destroyed its office and burned all contracts, records, bondage contracts with hired labourers, and promissory notes of various people...."[5]

The workmen supplied the working people's army with arms and ammunition, consolidating thereby the material, and military-technological basis for the Peasant War. The insurgent workmen of Isset Province organised the manufacture of cannon balls and case-shot for Pugachev's army. The workmen of the Avzyano-Petrovsky works placed at the disposal of the insurgents forty cannon, as well as bombs and cannon balls. The workers of the Voskresensk works cast eleven cannon for Pugachev's army. Sabres and lances were

[1] M. N. Martynov, op. cit., p. 231.

[2] Quoted from: A. A. Kondrashenkov, "The Peasant War of 1773-1775 in the Trans-Urals", *The Peasant Wars in Russia in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Problems, Quests, Solutions*, p. 196 (in Russian).

[3] Quoted from: M. N. Martynov, op. cit., p. 226.

[4] Quoted from: A. A. Kondrashenkov, op. cit., pp. 198-99.

[5] Quoted from: I. F. Ushakov, "On the History of the Peasant War under the Leadership of Y. I. Pugachev. Workmen of the Beloretsk Works in the Peasant War."—In: *The History of the USSR*, 1960, No. 6, p. 133 (in Russian).

hammered out at the Revda works. All in all, the insurgents in the Urals were joined by workmen of 64 works, i.e., one-half of the total number of iron works in the Urals. Twenty-two of them joined the insurgents on their own initiative, and the rest, after their arrival.[1]

Not infrequently the success of individual uprisings which flared up in the course of the war depended on the support of the peasants by workmen. When Pugachev's troops appeared in the Trans-Urals the joint actions of the workmen, peasants, Cossacks and other insurgents, including Bashkirs, led to the formation of new detachments which captured many cities, among them Chelyabinsk, Kurgan, and Kurtamysh. After the retreat from Chelyabinsk a tzarist general was worried most of all lest "the villains seize the Ekaterinburg works".[2]

For a full comprehension of the role played by the workmen in the peasant wars it is necessary to emphasise the following: "Each of these wars was another, still more devastating blow at the system of feudalism and serfdom, which pushed it towards its eventual downfall," writes L. V. Cherepnin.[3] It is hard to overestimate the significance of the workmen's activity in these wars. They served to consolidate the ties between the exploited peasants and workmen. Joint actions also strengthened the ties between the working masses of the Russian and other peoples of Russia (the Bashkir, the Kalmyk, the Tatars, the Chuvash, the Mordva, the Mari, the Udmurt, the Kazakhs, the Ukrainians) fighting together against the feudal and ethnic oppression by tzarism.

The workers' militant, revolutionary traditions adopted by the later generations of proletarian fighters were forged and established in the course of the peasant wars.

Very significant is the vague information that has come down to us about the response of the Russian workers to the Decembrist movement (for instance, disturbances at the Gagarin's works in 1826 and at gold-mines in the Urals and Siberia). A report on these events said: "Here there is free thinking and disobedience to the authorities."[4]

Labour struggle which combined with anti-feudal movements was in evidence in many other countries as well.

[1] See A. I. Andrushchenko, *The Peasant War of 1773-1775 on the Yaik, in the Anterior Urals, in the Urals, and in Siberia*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 241, 289 (in Russian).

[2] Quoted from: A. A. Kondrashenkov, op. cit., p. 202.

[3] L. V. Cherepnin, op. cit., p. 18.

[4] See A. M. Pankratova, "Labour Unrest in Feudal Russia in the First Half of the 19th Century (Introduction)", *The Labour Movement in Russia in the 19th Century*. Collected Documents and Records, Vol. I, part I, Moscow, 1955, p. 108 (in Russian).

THE WORKERS' ROLE IN THE EARLY BOURGEOIS REVOLUTIONS

Of special interest is labour participation in the early bourgeois revolutions, when the anti-feudal struggle reached its climax.

The historical period of the early bourgeois revolutions of the 16th-18th centuries was ushered in by the *Peasant War in Germany (1524-1525)*, which broke out under the ideological banner of the Reformation. In the course of the war the revolutionary peasantry and the urban lower classes established contacts, and a prospect arose for unity between the anti-feudal forces in town and country. Engels, who was the first to undertake an analysis of the social composition of the urban plebeian opposition in Germany of that period uncovered its structure and showed that it combined disintegrated parts of the old feudal and guild society with the as yet undeveloped, hardly emerged proletarian element. The proletarian strata constituted the most revolutionary part of the plebeian opposition. It was precisely when they took the upper hand that the revolutionary tide rose to its utmost height, although, as Engels underscored, it was this group of plebeians that "in the existing conditions ... found the least firm ground to stand on".[1] The aspirations of the proletarian lower classes in town and country gave food to the most revolutionary programmes of that period. The most consistent of them—the "Letter of Articles" (late 1524-early 1525)—set forward the demand for the complete liberation of the poor, all common people from oppression and for this purpose the removal of all masters and reorganisation of the social system with a view to the "common good" and in accordance with the "divine right". A new social system was contemplated in the final analysis as one without private property and exploitation and organised on egalitarian principles.[2] This document drawn up within the circle of the popular reformer Thomas Münzer—"the most spectacular figure of the Peasant War" (Engels), while reflecting the tasks of social destruction of the exploitive system, "overstepped the directly prevailing social and political conditions...".[3] He appealed above all to the whole mass of the poor common people and outlined a revolutionary path towards their emancipation. At the same time, Münzer pointed to the lowest, proletarian sections of the people—the impoverished peasants and the urban poor—as persons who in

---

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 409.

[2] *Flugschriften des Bauernkrieges*. Hrsg. von Klaus Kaczerowsky. Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1970, S. 15-16.

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968, p. 422.

his opinion possessed genuine intelligence. They had material interest in the extermination of oppressors and by virtue of their position were champions of justice and enemies of any egoism.

By his tactics Münzer sought to convince practically the working masses in town and country of the community of their interests, and prove to them that their main object was "to extirpate the root cause of all hardships of the poor people".[1] Münzer himself was in close touch with the proletarians—apprentices, "common people", "poor lads", miners, to whom he addressed his impassioned revolutionary appeals. Concrete examples of solidarity displayed in their struggle by the revolutionary peasantry and the proletarian masses of the cities could be clearly seen in the Upper Swabian region of the Peasant War, in the towns and villages around it—in Augsburg, Ulm, and many others.

The worker apprentices of Weissenhorn "willingly helped" the fighting peasants, as it was stated in one document. A chronicler of this city reports that revolutionary citizens visited peasants of the Leipheim detachment and gave them assistance. The majority of Leipheim citizens, including proletarians, joined the peasants.

The weaver workers of Ulm heeded the revolutionary appeals of the poor peasants. The Augsburg magistrature acknowledged that the city poor closely associated with the peasants and expressed its apprehensions of a consolidation of their union, since that might entail "something unpleasant" for the upper classes of the city. It often happened that the plebeian masses opened the city gates to insurgent peasants. In the course of the Peasant War the miners of Saxony, Thuringia and other regions became revolutionised. Münzer placed great hopes in them as the most active part of the proletariat with long-standing militant traditions. Appealing for an all-out people's war, he wrote: "Stir up villagers and townsmen, especially miners and other splendid lads who will prove useful for our cause."[2] Another leader of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, M. Gaismair, also called on the miners and peasants to join forces.

We learn from documents of that period how actively the Münzer party propagated the ideas of the common interests of the lower classes and the need for their joint actions. The peasants appealed to the city poor with proposals for unity of action; at the same time the revolutionary peasantry and the feudal counter-revolution constantly struggled to win over the city common people to their side. The leaders of the counter-revolutionary camp were aware (as is clearly attested to by documents coming from them) that the union

[1] See M. M. Smirin, *The People's Reformation of Thomas Münzer and the Great Peasant War*, Moscow, 1955, pp. 551-52, 528 in Russian).

[2] *Flugschriften des Bauernkrieges*, S. 121.

of the insurgent peasants with the city plebs, in which the proletarian elements were the most determined fighters, was a formidable force in the Peasant War. The ruling classes realised the grave danger of a widening of this union, which might result, as they believed, in a catastrophe they would be unable to bring under control. They were afraid of a "great war", in which the cities with their revolutionary proletarian strata would play the key role.

The culmination of the entire Peasant War was the movement in Thuringia under Münzer's personal leadership. It was here that the "plebeian faction of the towns [was] carried away by the general storm to such an extent that the embryonic proletarian element in it gained the upper hand for a time over all the other factions of the movement."[1] It led to a real coup and the formation in the city of Mühlhausen of a revolutionary government—the Permanent Council, organised, as the insurgents believed, for the purpose of establishing the equality of all people. The poor peasantry and the lower sections of the city plebs consisting of proletarians formed the core of the most dedicated fighters of this short (3 months) but heroic episode of the Peasant War, which ended in the tragic defeat of the insurgents and the torturous execution of Münzer himself.

The Peasant War ended in defeat throughout Germany, and among the causes responsible for this outcome Engels pointed out the failure of revolutionary elements to unite, having in mind, in particular, the inability of the peasants and plebeians to form a strong alliance for joint actions.[2] Münzer's party, the most consistent and stubborn force of the anti-feudal revolution, which consisted of "the most advanced section of the plebeians and peasants", in Engels' phrase, "always remained only a small minority of the insurgent masses".[3] The significance of this great event examined in the light of the history of the nascent proletariat in Germany consists in that "the German Peasant War pointed prophetically to future class struggles, by bringing on to the stage not only the peasants in revolt—that was no longer anything new—but behind them the beginnings of the modern proletariat, with the red flag in their hands and the demand for common ownership of goods on their lips."[4]

The popular masses were the main motive force of the *Netherlands Revolution* in the late 16th century. Among them a conspicuous place was occupied by the manufactory workmen, guild journeymen and apprentices, day-labourers, dockers, i.e., all those who made up the

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 408-09.
[2] See Ibid., p. 481
[3] Ibid., p. 427.
[4] F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 20.

emerging proletariat. Already in the Iconoclastic Rebellion in August 1566, which opened a long period of struggle by the people of the Netherlands against the mainstays of feudal society—a struggle covered with a panoply of the ideas of religious reformation—it was precisely the urban plebs and the peasantry that were in the forefront. They also included the proletarian lower strata who fought for national independence, against the Spanish domination and vigorously opposed the dominance of the Catholic Church. This powerful, mostly spontaneous impulse to general disobedience was followed by the rise of the movement of forest and sea gueux—people's avengers—guerrillas. Among these valiant fighters were workmen, poor craftsmen, impoverished peasants, seamen, fishermen, docks labourers. It is remarkable that forest gueux undertook the most determined actions in the industrial districts of Hondschoote, Furnes, and other cities.

The revolutionary energy of the people was multiplied by the furious indignation caused by the institution in the Netherlands of a permanent tax—alcabala—in 1571 by the Spanish vice regent Duke Alba, the head of the terrorist regime. An economic catastrophe ensued: commerce came to a standstill and manufactories closed down. For thousands of workers who were left without jobs and means of subsistence there was only one way to follow—a path of stubborn struggle in the revolutionary camp for bread and freedom from feudal-Catholic oppression.

For a number of decades, until the final completion of the revolution (1609), which combined the anti-feudal and national liberation tasks, the proletarian lower strata made up a formidable force among the urban plebs taking part in heroic uprisings that spread to almost all cities of the country.

A chronicler of that period pointed out the existence of an alliance between the gueux and "some citizens", "their sympathisers" who, organising uprisings, opened city gates to guerrillas and paved the road to victory. Significantly, another contemporary wrote that "all the main reforms in the country were implemented due to the insistence and valiant deeds of the common people".[1]

Already in the course of the revolution the bourgeoisie was apprehensive of the activity of the lower classes and in 1581 enacted a law depriving the popular masses of political rights in the territories liberated from foreigners.

By their revolutionary energy the plebeian lower strata achieved victory in the northern provinces of the Netherlands and the proclamation of a republic—the first bourgeois state in history. In con-

[1] Quoted from: A. N. Chistozvonov, *The Netherlands Bourgeois Revolution of the 16th Century*, Moscow, 1958, pp. 76-77.

sequence of their organisational and ideological immaturity they were unable to act as an independent fighting force and gain ascendancy over the young national bourgeoisie with its selfish, narrow class interests.

The people also played the main part in the first bourgeois revolution on an all-European scale—*the English Revolution* in the mid-17th century. Here the lower classes were represented by workers of the manufactories and small workshops, journeymen, apprentices as well as a large mass of proletarianised, expropriated elements in town and country. The workers in the true sense of the word, paupers, impoverished peasants and craftsmen—all of them joined the powerful movement of the peasant-plebeian camp. It waged its struggle in both organised and spontaneous forms. The masses expressed their organised revolutionary protest initially under the slogans of the bloc of the bourgeoisie and the nobility: at first, of the most moderate leaders of the movement—the presbyterians and later, of the more radical Independents. In the election to the Long Parliament, the convening of which in 1640 marked the beginning of the revolution, the workers, as a British historian noted, took a stand for the candidates opposed to absolutism.[1] In the early, constitutional period of the revolution (1640-1642) the lower strata of the people became, as evidenced by a contemporary, loyal friends of the Parliament in the struggle against the King. Another contemporary emphasised this important factor: the revolutionary Parliament was immediately supported by the people of the industrially developed counties.[2] Regardless of the conduct and programmes of the allied classes (i.e., the new nobility and the bourgeoisie) the people struggled in their own way for their own demands. Of great importance were the activities of the religious sects, which became widespread throughout the country as organisational cells of their own kind, which gave vent to the popular criticism of the feudal-absolutist regime. Sectarianism gave expression to the opposition of the poorest labourers to the powers that be and exploitation. Among the spontaneous forms of the movement were the riots of "cudgelers" who made short work of their feudal oppressors by means of cudgels, axes and pitchforks. In 1643 a pamphlet was circulated in which the propertied classes expressed their grave apprehensions of the actions of the "poorer sort".[3] And in 1645 leaders of the revolutionary camp appealed to their supporters "to join with and assist one another in the mutual

[1] Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714*, Sphere Books Ltd., London, 1969, p. 110.

[2] Ibid., pp. 113, 114.

[3] D. Digges, *The Unlawfulness of Subjects Taking Up Armes Against Their Sovereigne in What Case Soever*, 1643, p. 143.

defence of our liberties and properties against all plunderers and all other unlawful violence whatsoever".[1] The popular masses impelled by need and poverty pressed for and secured more radical socio-economic reforms carried out in the process of transition from one stage of the revolution to another. Thanks to the interference of the lower strata of the people the revolution was brought, as Engels wrote, "to the bitter end",[2] i.e., the overthrow of the feudal-absolutist monarchy. It was the lower classes that cemented the revolutionary English democracy of that period. The abolition of the monarchy and the victory of the republic achieved under the pressure of the masses, who were ideologically inspired by the programme of the petty-bourgeois democrats, the Levellers, advanced the revolution to the bourgeois-democratic stage. The right-wing leaders of the revolutionary movement wrote about these events in horror in 1649 that the worst had happened, the lowest commoners were in power in London.[3] Significantly, the heroes of the Münzer commune and Thomas Münzer himself were known and remembered among the people.

Honest fighters in the ranks of the Levellers were aware that all the burden of the hardships of the revolution was borne by the proletarians, those who worked on the farms and in the crafts for low pay. The most far-sighted of them realised that the people could not gain freedom unless property was abolished.[4] It was then at a time of bitter disillusionment of the country's poor that an independent ultra-left section of the revolutionary camp—the true Levellers (Diggers)—emerged out of the general democratic mass. As a British historian justly notes, the "quarrel between Levellers and Diggers was between those who were satisfied with traditional property relations provided small men were protected against the powerful, and those who wanted private property ultimately to be abolished."[5]

The origins of this current should also be sought in events before the proclamation of the republic: "Its roots go down into the depth of the democratic movement as the most striking expression of the

---

[1] *The Good Old Cause. The English Revolution of 1640-60. Its Causes, Course and Consequences. Extracts from Contemporary Sources*, Edited by Christopher Hill and Edmund Dell, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1949, p. 306.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, p 105.

[3] G. Bate, *A. Short Narrative of the Late Troubles in England*, London, 1649, p. 131.

[4] Quoted from: G. R. Levin, *The Democratic Movement in the English Bourgeois Revolution*, Leningrad, 1973, pp. 205, 209 (in Russian).

[5] Christopher Hill, *Reformation to Industrial Revolution. A Social and Economic History of Britain, 1530-1780*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1968, p. 101.

ideology of the lowest strata of the people at all stages of the revolution."[1]

The social meaning of the Digger movement was many-sided. It showed that the proletarian lower strata demanding the solution of the agrarian problem by handing over the land to the peasants were the vehicle of a genuine and consistent anti-feudal programme. At the same time the appearance of the Diggers was highly symptomatic precisely because it meant a denial of the bourgeois revolution which failed to meet the needs of the proletarian elements of English society. This denial is expressed in the works of the Digger ideologists, primarily the most prominent of them, Gerrard Winstanley. Besides a negatively critical attitude to the outer world they contain a constructive programme of social reorganisation through the abolition of private property, any exploitation (not only feudal but also bourgeois) on the principles of primitive egalitarian communism.

The significance of the Digger movement was also expressed in that not only did it reflect the vague social dreams of the common people about a new social system but also attempted to set a model of how to implement their ideal in practice. In the counties of Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Kent, and Northamptonshire the Diggers set up communistic colonies on the principles of common property and collective work, cleared and cultivated waste lands (hence their name Diggers).

The Digger movement was the culmination of the independent movement of the lower strata in the course of the revolution: it embodied the *ascending line* in the development of the bourgeois revolution itself, the true history of its democratic stage.[2] It is significant that the allied classes which had come to power were aware of the utter incompatibility of their social positions with those of the Diggers. The Privy Council said in one of its messages that a simple "...conflux of people may be a beginning whence things of a greater and more dangerous consequence may grow, to the disturbance of the peace and quiet of the Commonwealth".[3] Therefore, although this movement, while being profoundly revolutionary in content, remained peaceful in methods, it was nevertheless persecuted. When the authorities of the republic of the bourgeois and the gentry, as well as some landlords in counties raided and destroyed the Diggers' communes they dispersed without resistance. The movement died down already in 1650. Its profound implications, however, are of permanent significance.

The participation of the emerging proletariat in the early American bourgeois revolution was observed already in the early period of the

[1] M. A. Barg, *The Common People in the English Bourgeois Revolution of the 17th Century*, Moscow, 1967, p. 143 (in Russian).
[2] See M. A. Barg, op. cit., pp. 15, 98-99.
[3] *The Good Old Cause*, op. cit., p. 383.

War of Independence of England's colonies in America. It is studied mostly by Marxists, and in recent time the New Left in American historiography have also called for research into the history of "the powerless, the inarticulate, the poor...."[1] The militant activity of labour has been traced back to the very beginning of the struggle of the colonists against the imperial country. This activity reached a high pitch in the sixties and seventies of the 18th century when the bourgeois-democratic trend of the movement gradually took shape, when the "lower orders" of the mob or the "vulgar herd", in the phrase of the malicious aristocrats of that time, came on the political scene.[2]

Even before the open War of Independence, various societies, unions, and clubs sprang up in the country. Within them patriotic ideas matured and plans were drawn up of a struggle for national independence, a democratic system and socio-economic reforms. The biggest of them in the scale of activity was the Sons of Liberty society (1765), which had branches everywhere: from New England to South Carolina. It affiliated workers (along with craftsmen and other working people, as well as the revolutionary part of the bourgeoisie and plantation owners who had assumed leadership). Sometimes labour organisations of individual trades, for instance the Sons of Neptune seamen's union established contacts with the Sons of Liberty. It was them that a pro-British colonist had in mind when he, obsessed with fear of the domination of "a riotous mob", wrote that "the mob begin to think and to reason".[3] Samuel Adams, an outstanding leader of the Sons of Liberty, heavily relied on the "'firm patriotism' of the town labor and the small farmers ... that must finally save this country".[4]

England's policy towards its 13 North American colonies led to a series of massive protest actions of the people led by the Sons of Liberty in the 1760s. A notable part in these actions was played by the proletarians, who were determined to win freedom, as they sang in their song:

Come rally Sons of Liberty
Come all with hearts united
Our motto is 'We Dare Be Free
Not easily affrighted!

---

[1] Jesse Lemisch, "The American Revolution Seen from the Bottom Up".— In: *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History*, Ed. by Barton J. Bernstein, Pantheon Books, New York, 1968, p. 29.

[2] Merrill Jensen, "The American People and the American Revolution".— In: *The Journal of American History*, Vol. LVII, No. 1, June 1970, p. 15.

[3] *The American Revolution, 1763-1783. A Bicentennial Collection*, Ed. by Richard B. Morris, Harper & Row Publishers, New York, Evanston, and London, 1970, p. 143.

[4] Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement...*, op. cit., p. 35.

Such were the disturbances of workers and craftsmen in Boston in August and November 1765; a clash between the people and British colonial troops in the same city in March 1770, when several workers were killed (the Boston Massacre, after which the English colonialists were called "bloody butchers"[1]) and other protest actions of the people, which turned Boston into a revolutionary centre; the popular movement, which spread through all the colonies, for a boycott of English laws (New York longshoremen, Boston construction workers in 1768). John Adams, a prominent figure in the national liberation movement, believed that these events had laid the foundation of American independence.[2]

Already at that time their fear of the people's activity united the supporters of the British domination in the midst of the colonial propertied classes (Tory loyalists). As a contemporary said about one of them, "he feared the tyranny of mob rule more than the tyranny of Parliament" (i.e., British rule—*Author*).[3] At the same time the open anti-British actions of the people contributed to the consolidation of the revolutionary camp. The people struggled consistently against both the British yoke and its socio-political support in the colonial society itself. In the course of the struggle workers of different colonies demonstrated their solidarity. In 1768 in Boston unemployed carpenters and stone-masons refused as true patriots to build barracks for British soldiers. Although they were in dire straits, they did not fall for earnings of this kind, and the authorities were compelled to invite workers from New York. The carpenters and stone-masons of New York, however, wholeheartedly supported the Boston workers and also refused the offer in token of solidarity. Manifestations of international labour solidarity, quite rare at that time, were also in evidence in that period. In colonial Ireland an organisation of the Sons of Liberty was set up to give moral and material support to the fighters in the American colonies. English workers (weavers, seamen, tailors, miners) expressed their solidarity with and approved of the actions of the colonists, although the loss of the American market by Britain often meant for them unemployment and a life of semi-starvation.

The people's initiative prodded the elite of the bourgeoisie and plantation owners to adopt radical methods of abolishing the colonial regime in America and to deepen the political and socio-economic reforms. As one of their representatives wrote, "if the disputes with

---

[1] Richard B. Morris and William Greenleaf, *U.S.A. The History of Nation...*, op. cit., pp. 225-26.

[2] Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Vol. I, New York, 1947, pp. 42-43.

[3] Herbert Aptheker, *The American Revolution 1763-1783*, International Publishers, New York, 1960, p. 48.

Great Britain continue ...we shall be under the domination of a riotous mob."[1]

The irreconcilability of the people—the workers, farmers and craftsmen—resulted in the convening of the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia in 1774, the expansion of the activity of the correspondence committees which were later converted into safety committees, the setting up of the supervisory committees, the popular defence committee. All of them were, in effect, "a means of organising revolutionary forces",[2] the rudiments of revolutionary government, local bodies responsible for the unity of action between the colonies.

By their spontaneous actions the popular masses anticipated decisions of the bourgeoisie and plantation owners, who were at the head of the revolution. "The people are now ahead of you.... The people's blood is too hot to admit of delays," a contemporary warned one of the leaders of the First Continental Congress. Another participant in the struggle confirmed that "...the people ... have indeed outrun their leaders, so that no capital measure has been adopted until they called loudly for it".[3] During the War of Independence the workers fought with equal success on two fronts: against the external and internal counter-revolution. In addition to open military operations, they resorted to purely plebeian methods to deal with loyalists: mob law, confiscation of arms and property. In the early period of the war it was precisely the irreconcilable stand taken by the people that made possible the proclamation of independence by the Second Continental Congress in 1776, which contributed in its turn to the further upsurge of the revolutionary democratic struggle. William Z. Foster wrote: "Although there were as yet no definitely formed working class and clear-cut workers' program and organization, nevertheless, there were considerable bodies of wage workers—seamen, longshoremen, bakers, brewers, blacksmiths, hatters, tailors, laborers, and others—and they were a driving force in the Revolution for unqualified national independence."[4]

In the second stage of the war, inspired by their victory, the workers along with the entire labouring population of the former colonies, now within the framework of an independent state, strove for the defeat of British troops, the suppression of the internal counter-revo-

---

[1] *The American Revolution, 1763-1783. A Bicentennial Collection*, Ed. by Richard B. Morris, Harper & Row Publishers, New York, Evanston, and London, 1970, p. 143.

[2] Quoted from H. Aptheker, op. cit., pp. 83, 84.

[3] Ibid., pp. 58, 59.

[4] William Z. Foster, *Outline Political History of the Americas*, International Publishers, New York, 1951, p. 127.

lution and a consistently democratic solution of political and socio-economic problems.

Proletarians took part in regular military operations against British troops and in the guerrilla movement. They fought for the consolidation of independence in the severe conditions of hunger and privations, speculation and a rise in the cost of living. Under the pressure of the working people price controls and guaranteed wage rates were instituted in individual cities and states. Where they could not secure price and wage controls by legal means the workers themselves dealt with profiteers, organised strikes, etc. The sentiment of the workers and labour in general was clearly expressed in a document of that period: "We have arms in our hands and know the use of them, nor will we lay them down till this is accomplished."[1]

The revolutionary terror spontaneously exercised by the working masses contributed to victory over the agents of the imperial country—the loyalists—and to the successful outcome of the War of Independence. The labourers and other working people of American society, however, failed to achieve their ends in full. Their aspirations for national self-determination, which were shared by the most revolutionary-minded circles of the bourgeoisie and plantation owners, were supplemented with a demand for wider democratisation of the political system and radical socio-economic reforms. The tasks of this kind were not consistently fulfilled in accordance with the interests of the people. The workers hoped that in the new state their material needs would be satisfied and their political rights guaranteed. However, the democratic tendency of the Revolution, a tendency one of whose vehicles in the War of Independence was the emerging proletariat, was not brought into full play. Suffrage was restricted by property, educational, and settlement qualifications, etc. Racial discrimination against black proletarians remained even to the north of the State of Maryland where slavery had been abolished.

After the completion of the Revolution the economic conditions of labour, far from improving, even deteriorated, which was attributable, in particular, to severe inflation.

Nevertheless, the results of the Revolution were historically progressive for American society as a whole, for the proletariat in particular. The War of Independence was "one of those great, really liberating, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few compared to the vast number of wars of conquest."[2] For the workers it was a primary school of organisational unity and political enlightenment. Within the framework of the independent bourgeois republic

---

[1] Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*... op. cit., p. 45.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Letter to American Workers", *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 62.

established by the Revolution labour struggle rose to a higher level, because many obstacles were torn down, primarily the colonial oppression, and could no longer conceal the socio-economic antagonism of labour and capital.

Turning to the history of the *bourgeois revolution in France* in the late 18th century, one can see that the epithet "great" applied to it refers in the first place to the definition of its character as a bourgeois-*democratic* revolution. The demands of the people and the methods they used left a deep imprint on the entire development of this Revolution (1789-1794). Led by different sections of the bourgeoisie, they nevertheless independently exercised "criticism by weapons" from below, wresting from the political hegemon new gains and pushing the whole movement forward. The current level of research into the many-sided influence of the struggle of the popular masses on the course of the Revolution suggests the conclusion that along with the majority of the French people—the peasantry, as well as the craftsmen—the "fourth estate", i.e., the proletarian strata in town and country left an indelible imprint on all its developments.

The workers, who had not yet formed into a class, were, along with the other plebeian masses, in control in Paris, which in its turn dominated the country due to political centralisation.[1] There were an average of 1,530 workers in each of the forty-eight sections of Paris. In the Graville section there were 4,699 of them, in the Ponce section—5,288. The three sections of Saint Antoine had 4,519 workers.

Wage earners were 10 per cent of the total membership of the revolutionary committees in the Paris sections.[2] On the whole the working people of Paris accounted roughly for one-half of the city's population.

Georges Lefebvre, an outstanding French historian, who had experienced the influence of Marxism, emphasised that "a large number of revolutionary events in the Revolution ... cannot be interpreted correctly without consideration of the role of the sans-culottes.[3] Among the sans-culottes, i.e., the city plebeian masses, wage earners formed the lower stratum and were the most revolutionary ferment of the movement. These were the exploited workers of the manufactories, journeymen, apprentices, hired hands of small workshops—in short, "the poorest elements of capital" in the phrase of another French historian, M. Dommanget.[4]

---

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 53.

[2] Gwyn A. Williams, *Artisans and Sans-Culottes. Popular Movement in France and Britain During the French Revolution*, Edward Arnold (Publishers), Ltd., London, 1968, p. 21.

[3] Quoted from: Y. M. Zakher, *The Movement of the Sans-Culottes*, Moscow, 1961, p. 21 (in Russian).

[4] M. Dommanget, *Jacques Roux, le curé rouge, et le Manifeste des Enragés*, Paris (s. a.), p. 77.

Each of the three stages of the Revolution was opened by a great popular uprising in Paris, with the result that the Revolution advanced to a higher level. The militancy of the Parisian workers was clearly manifest already in the taking of the Bastille, which ushered in the first stage of the Revolution (July 14, 1789-August 10, 1792). Between July 10 and 14 the workers—builders, coopers, and others—took part in street fighting which culminated in the fall of the fortress. They accounted for about one-fourth of the "conquerors of the Bastille".[1]

The "municipal Revolution" which broke out in other cities of France (July-August, 1789) was also the product of the revolutionary instinct of the plebeian masses, the workers above all. In Strasbourg the workers armed with axes and hammers sealed the fate of the old municipality, overthrowing it. In other cases (for instance, in Troyes) the workers and the plebeian masses in general relied on the support of the peasants from the neighbouring districts.

"The impoverished class alone carried out the revolution", the workers themselves wrote to Jean Paul Marat's newspaper *L'Ami du Peuple* some time later.[2]

On August 30, 1789, when the fundamental question of limiting the power of the King was being decided, the workers, who were part of the Parisian plebs, were acting vigorously, while the representatives of the moderate political wing in the bourgeois leadership of the Revolution—fellans—engaged in "talking and writing".[3]

Workers and their wives took part in the march of thousands of protesters on Versailles on October 5-6, 1789, which played a decisive role in thwarting the counter-revolutionary conspiracy. The petition the workers of the Saint-Antoine suburb submitted to the Constituent Assembly on February 13, 1790, evidenced a direct intrusion of the proletarians into the sphere of struggle for suffrage: the workers opposed the restricted character of what Gracchus Babeuf, a revolutionary Utopian Communist of that time, described as "inhuman" electoral law, which had "shamelessly deprived five-sixths of all citizens of human rights".[4] Also in that period the workers of the Sevres royal manufactory also submitted a demand for suffrage to the Constituent Assembly.

The economic struggle caused by the food crisis united the French plebs. The wage earners, however, suffered most in the prevailing

[1] George Rude, "Les ouvriers parisiens dans la Révolution Française".— In: *La Pensée*, N. 48-49, 1953, p. 114-15.

[2] Quoted from: Y. M. Zakher, op. cit., p. 48.

[3] Marcel Rouff, "Le peuple ouvrier de Paris aux journées de 30 juin et de 30 août 1789".— In: *La Révolution Française*, t. 63, Paris, 1912, p. 504.

[4] Quoted from: V. M. Dalin, *Gracchus Babeuf on the Eve of and During the Great French Revolution (1785-1794)*, Moscow, 1963, p. 284 (in Russian).

situation. That was the reason for the specifically proletarian protest actions—strikes, the setting up of labour organisations pursuing the tasks of struggle for higher wages and a shorter working day (for example, the carpenters' and printers' unions in Paris), and, finally, petitions of Parisian workers complaining against their employers to the municipality, the Constituent Assembly, or newspapers. On the whole the level of labour consciousness was still low. At the same time, individual letters showed the rudiments of maturity unusual in that period. For example, a petition from stone-masons exposed the "malversations and turpitude" of their employers who had "amassed enormous fortunes at the expense of poor workers"; the authors of the letter realised that the revolution in the name of the nation was implemented by the poor alone, while those who were "devouring the fruits of the sweat of the workers" were "hiding out in their lairs" during revolutionary days.[1]

The upsurge in the strike movement in the spring and summer of 1791 resulted in adoption of the Le Chapelier anti-labour law on June 14, 1791. The law which prohibited labour strikes and unions on pain of severe penalties for the offenders largely contributed to the enlightenment of the workers: the bourgeoisie had exhibited the self-interest characteristic of its class.

The subsequent political crisis (Louis XVI's attempt to escape to Varennes) found the Parisian workers ready for even more resolute actions. They took part in the capture of an arsenal, took a stand against the Constituent Assembly and for the division of large fortunes "between the needy". A study of the history of the massacre of a popular demonstration organised to denounce the monarchy after Varennes indicates that workers from different sections of the capital accounted for a large proportion of the demonstrators.[2]

The workers of Paris took part in all crucial episodes in the second stage of the Revolution (August 10, 1792-May 31, 1793). In the uprising of August 10, 1792, which overthrew the power of the most moderate bourgeoisie (fellans) and then toppled the monarchy, 20 of the 43 killed, and 30 of the 82 wounded were workers.

The movement of the sans-culottes which had started in the spring of 1792 became the mouthpiece of the plebeian masses in that period. The actions of the sans-culottes, particularly from the beginning of 1793, were directed against inflation and high prices, for price ceilings on foodstuffs and punishment of profiteers. "We demand capital

---

[1] Quoted from: "*L'Ami du Peuple*, 12 Juin 1791".—In: Y. M. Zakher, op. cit., p. 48.

[2] George E. Rude, "La composition sociale des Insurrections parisiennes de 1789 à 1791".—In: *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 1952, N. 127, pp. 281-88.

punishment for buyers-up and speculators!" wrote laundry women workers in a petition to the Convention on February 24, 1793.

When the Convention rejected the petition and the people took spontaneous actions to deal with the profiteers, the workers became actively involved in them. Thirty of some fifty detained participants in the disturbances of February 25 and 26 were wage labourers.

A new tide of the proletarian movement arose in the spring of 1793 when the Parisian workers started a struggle simultaneously against the speculators and against their employers. It was not fortuitous that the following warnings came from the midst of the bourgeoisie: "Property is in danger", "a war is imminent between the haves and the havenots".[1] It is significant that it was precisely at that time that the "propertied aristocracy" advanced a new slogan: "Liberty, equality, property!"

The popular uprising in Paris on May 31-June 2, 1793 led the Revolution to its highest stage—the establishment of the domination of the Jacobins, the most revolutionary party of the bourgeois democrats in the bourgeois camp, to the formalisation of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship. The Jacobins came to power in alliance with the *Enragés* and thanks to the support of all sans-culottes. Analysing the composition of the militants and popular leaders, Albert Soboul concludes that there were more wage earners among them than among other categories of officials in the Parisian sections. Wage earners, journeymen and apprentices, day workers and general labourers made up 12.4 per cent of the participants in the people's struggle.[2]

The workers along with the other plebeian strata under the influence of the *Enragés* expected, above all, the solution of their pressing vital problem—food. They wrote in one of their petitions: "It is time bread was guaranteed for the wage earners, this modest tribe doomed to stubborn and arduous labour. It is time the republican government prohibited profiteering from human life".[3] The leader of the *Enragés*, Jacques Roux, declared immediately after the revolutionary coup of June 2 that the working class of society is deprived of the possibility to exist on the soil wetted with its tears, while the rich have acquired the power of life and death over the poor". He said that "freedom does not mean the right to starve one's neighbours".[4] The workers of the Saint Antoine suburb demanded that

---

[1] Quoted from: Albert Mathiez, *La Révolution française*, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris, 1927, p. 206.

[2] Albert Soboul, *Les sans-culottes parisiens en l'an II Mouvement populaire et gouvernement révolutionnaire (1793-1794)*, 1968, pp. 53-54.

[3] Ibid., p. 458.

[4] Albert Mathiez, *La vie chère et le mouvement social sous la terreur*, Payot, Paris, 1927, p. 213.

the new government deliver them from the scourge of unemployment, the fear of disease and old age, guarantee them a right to work and social security proclaimed in the Jacobin Constitution.

Before long, however, the masses saw for themselves the indecision of the Jacobins and the half-heartedness of their reforms. This gave rise to another tide of unrest. The workers again turned out into the streets in protest against food shortages and high prices (July-August 1793). They joined the sans-culottes in looting grain transports and obtained the necessaries of life by guerrilla tactics.

The *Enragés* warned then that a new insurrection was imminent: "the people will have to save themselves".[1] Indeed, on September 4-5, 1793, the sans-culottes, with workers of the Saint Antoine and other proletarian suburbs of Paris rose in arms to a struggle for their vital interests. As pointed out by Soboul, "the labour origin of this movement is indisputable: it originated within the most proletarianised sections of the sans-culottes, in the ranks of those labourers, who were neither shop-keepers nor craftsmen and eked out a living, earning their wages by hard work."[2] The proletarian mob consisted of stone-masons, building workers, fitters, workmen of armouries and the national printshop. In their petition to the municipality they demanded: "You should see to it that a worker who has worked a full day and needs a night rest will not have to spend part of the night in search of bread, often fruitlessly for that matter, and then lose part of the next day."[3] At the will of the insurgent poor the Jacobins introduced a universal ceiling on prices and placed terror against the profiteers on the order of the day. They could not but respond also to the political demands of the sans-culottes—for the use of terror against the counter-revolutionaries, for effective organisation of defence of the Republic against foreign intervention by declaring a general mobilisation and forming a people's volunteer corps.

The workers forged the victory of the Revolution. "For the revolutionary bourgeoisie the sans-culottes provided the manoeuvrable mass which was so necessary for the overthrow of the older order and for victory over the foreign coalition."[4] However, while making substantial concessions to the masses, the Jacobins at the same time sent the genuine leaders of the plebeian population—the *Enragés*—to the guillotine, introduced a wage minimum disastrous for the workers, and preserved the Le Chapelier anti-labour law. Naturally, the workers continued their struggle for their rights in the period of the Jacobin dictatorship as well.

The workers together with the mass of the working people ensured

[1] Quoted from: Y. M. Zakher, op. cit., p. 124.
[2] Albert Soboul, op. cit., p. 166.
[3] Op. cit., p. 167.
[4] Op. cit., p. 10.

the ascending development of the Revolution and the domination of bourgeois democracy in its third stage. The energy of the plebeians, Engels said, "alone has saved the revolution".[1] What is more, "the bourgeois .. were too cowardly to defend their own interests..., the plebs had to do all the work for them..., thereby these plebeians alone carried out the Revolution."[2]

In other words, the nascent proletariat of France in the peasant-plebeian camp and in the smaller camp of the sans-culottes showed themselves to be staunch fighters for general democratic reforms. By their revolutionary actions they prodded different sections of the bourgeoisie towards a radical, fundamental solution of the pressing vital problems.

Let us examine the most general features characteristic of labour involvement in the revolutionary remaking of the "old order".

During the early bourgeois revolutions of the 16th-18th centuries, in the epoch of manufactory capitalism, the proletariat as a class was still in the formative stage. The workers were disunited and dispersed even where they numerically formed a conspicuous social stratum in society (for instance, in 18th-century France). The structural disunity of the proletariat accounted for its nearly complete dissolution in the mass of the people. The proletariat itself acted in a scattered fashion and could not be the cementing force in the peasant-plebeian camp.

In the early bourgeois revolutions the workers came out as a socially isolated force in purely economic, specifically proletarian protest actions—strikes, which merged, as a rule, into the political struggle of the revolutionary forces. This fact is manifest with special clarity in the history of the American and the French Revolution.

The ideologists and fighters for the cause of the wage earners expressed "the aspirations of a real section of society",[3] which in its outlook "reached beyond the then scarcely dawning modern bourgeois society ... an absolutely propertyless faction, it questioned the institutions, views and conceptions common to all societies based on class antagonisms."[4] Recent historical research indicates that in the English Revolution the proletarian elements not only proclaimed their own platform through the mouth of the Diggers but also took a stand apart from the general democratic mass. Their movement was profoundly dialectical in content. It was a trend within the framework of the bourgeois revolution, and its programme provided the answer to the tasks of this revolution, but at the same time the Diggers as the extreme left force of English democracy overstepped the

[1] See Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 384.
[2] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 37, S. 155.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 415.
[4] See ibid.

bourgeois limits and by their conduct and views anticipated the rejection of the exploitive social system of private property and gain.

On the whole, Engels pointed out, even in the relatively more developed of the early revolutions, the bourgeois-democratic revolution in France, "the proletariat, which then for the first time evolved itself from these 'have-nothing' masses as the nucleus of a new class"[1] was as yet quite incapable of independent political action. The latter fact can be seen in particular also in that the wage labourers—the strike force which destroyed the old regimes—failed to display initiative in political matters and were not admitted to the local, let alone central, bodies of the new government. The instant reaction of the bourgeois revolutionaries to the possible(!) admission of proletarians to municipalities was clearly visible in the Netherlands Revolution (the enactment of the law of 1581). There were no workers in the revolutionary municipalities of France either.

In the peasant-plebeian camp the proletariat showed the greatest revolutionary spirit and heroism. However, the degrees of activity of the peasant-plebeian masses, the proletarians among them, which gave impetus to the revolutionary upsurge were not identical. The people and their lower strata succeeded in impressing their demands and methods of struggle on revolutionary developments in different ways varying with the concrete historical conditions of a given country. This is precisely why in the English Revolution only one of its stages was bourgeois-democratic. The French Revolution, however, was bourgeois-democratic from beginning to end.

The peasant-plebeian masses prodded the bourgeois revolutionaries towards the most determined actions and reforms. All the revolutions of that epoch were characterised by ascending progressive development. This is their essential distinction from the bourgeois revolutions of the mid-19th century which developed along a descending line in consequence of the fact, as Engels wrote, that behind "the bourgeoisie stands everywhere the proletariat"[2]—the newly formed main exploited class of bourgeois society. In the 16th-18th centuries the workers came out merely as the "first precursors of the modern bourgeois society"[3]; the class antagonism between the proletarians and the bourgeoisie was not yet as strikingly manifest as in the 19th century. Accordingly, it was not expressed in the course of the revolutions so patently as later.

One of the general laws of the bourgeois revolutions became manifest as early as the 16th-18th centuries: "In order to secure even those conquests of the bourgeoisie that were ripe for gathering at the time,

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 119.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 528.

[3] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 415.

the revolution had to be carried considerably further...."[1] In the first two revolutions of all-European significance—the English and the French—there was saliently outlined a situation in which the popular masses, including the proletarians, acted as a "pusher" impelling the bourgeoisie to seize power.

Finally, it should be emphasised that in two revoluitons which were to accomplish and really accomplished the tasks of national liberation (in the Netherlands and especially in the American Revolution) the workers proved to be conscious fighters against foreign oppression, active champions of national consolidation and independence.

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 105.

Chapter 2

THE FORMATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL PROLETARIAT. THE WORKING CLASS IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

THE GENERAL FEATURES AND PATTERNS OF FORMATION

A new stage in the process of the formation of the working class was linked with the next stage in the development of capitalism in industry, namely, with the spread of factory production, when the industrial proletariat came on the scene. The main prerequisite for its formation was the Industrial Revolution, which first began in England in the last third of the 18th century and somewhat later in the continental countries of Europe and in North America. The Industrial Revolution was the final stage in the formation of capitalist relations.[1] It was a synthesis of deep-going historically progressive techno-economic changes in a radical reformation of the former socio-economic structure. Numerous technical inventions which were applied in practice in the latter third of the 18th and the first half of the 19th century (the technical revolution) were the starting point and the basis of the Industrial Revolution. They served to reorganise production radically. Manufacturing processes formerly performed manually were handed over to working machines[2]. Thenceforward the machine became an instrument of labour which ousted craftsmen's tools. Of immense importance was the invention of a universal heat-engine—the steam engine of James Watt. The technical revolution placed the capitalist social system on the foundation of machine technology, in other words, a material and technological basis adequate to capitalism was laid.

However, the displacement of handicraft tools by machines, of manual labour by mechanical production meant not only a long step forward in the development of productive forces. The Industrial Revolution was a fundamentally new qualitative phase in capitalist

---

[1] For a circumstantial analysis of different conceptions of the Industrial Revolution see: J. Purš, *Průmyslova revoluce. Vývoy pojmu koncepce*, Praha, 1973, s. 13-282.

[2] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 352-53.

production as a whole, namely, a transition from the manufactory to the factory. "Machinery," Marx wrote, "does away with co-operation based on handricrafts, and with manufacture based on the division of handicraft labour."[1] "Steam and the new tool-making machinery were transforming manufacture," Engels pointed out, "into modern industry, and thus revolutionising the whole foundation of bourgeois society."[2]

The cardinal change in the technology and organisation of production, the conversion of the manufactory into a "machino-factory"[3], to use a figurative expression of French historians, the spread and establishment of the factory system called into being a perfectly new category of direct producers—the industrial, primarily the factory proletariat. In Engels' view, it was "the mightiest result of ... industrial transformation".[4]

For its socio-economic status and image the industrial proletariat differed essentially from the wage labourers of the manufactory period. The latter constituted a relatively small and, what was more important, a socially unstable group. This was particularly true of cottage industry workers. Their existence was rooted in certain elements of economic independence provided by a land-holding, a house, subsidiary household and working tools. They also preserved to a definite extent patriarchal closeness to their masters, in small workshops at any rate.

In the epoch of the Industrial Revolution the direct producers were completely deprived of the means of production. The small producers, who had formerly been relatively independent, were expelled in enormous numbers and joined the ranks of wage labourers. Now they lost forever the possibility to regain their former status and become owners of means of production, since "their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which modern Industry is carried on".[5] He who was born a wage labourer had only one prospect before him—to remain such for the rest of his life. From now on the only property of the proletarians was their labour power. They could earn a living only by selling it to the capitalists. "The manufactory worker," Engels wrote, "is torn up from his patriarchal relations by large-scale industry, loses the property he still has and thereby only then himself becomes a proletarian."[6] The gigantic growth of capitalist

---

[1] Ibid., p. 432.
[2] Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1977, p. 316.
[3] Claude Fohlen, François Bédarida, *L'ère des révolutions (1765-1914)*.—In: *Histoire générale du travail*, publiée sous la direction de Louis-Henri Parias, Nouvelle Librairie de France, Paris, 1960, p. 27.
[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 320.
[5] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 492.
[6] Ibid., p. 345.

industry perpetuated the existence of the class of wage workers, "increased it numerically and made it a special class...."[1] Thus, the wage workers constituted from that time a large and stable social stratum occupying a clearly defined place in the system of production.

In contrast to the proletariat of the manufactory period the industrial proletariat appeared as a concentrated social group. Large-scale capitalist industry itself—factories, plants, mines, etc.—became a tool for its concentration. According to Marx's definition, capital "concentrates at one spot" enormous masses of wage workers, "whom it directly commands".[2] At the same time the factory puts the workers in such conditions of work and life that are identical in principle and this also distinguishes the industrial proletariat from the wage labourers of the manufactory period, whose position was characterised by an extremely wide variety and heterogeneity. In the epoch of the Industrial Revolution the economic conditions, Marx wrote, "had first transformed the mass of the people of the country into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a *common situation*, *common interests*. This mass is thus already a *class* (emphasis added—*Author*) as against capital".[3]

Developing Marx's idea Lenin drew a fundamental distinction in this sense between the manufactory proletariat and the proletariat of the industrial type. Although in the manufactory, he pointed out, "the gulf between the one who owns the means of production and the one who works now becomes very wide", nevertheless "the multitude of small establishments, the retention of the tie with the land, the adherence to tradition in production and in the whole manner of living—all this creates a mass of intermediary elements between the extremes of manufacture and retards the development of these extremes".[4] On the contrary, in large-scale machine industry "the acuteness of social contradictions reaches the highest point".[5] It was large-scale machine industry that created the category of permanent, hereditary workers, completely and inseparably linked with factories and works.

The formation of the industrial proletariat as an objective socio-economic process had its subjective characteristics at the same time. They were expressed in an awareness of the common interests of its different groups and of the antagonism between these interests and those of the ruling classes, in the formation and consolidation of

[1] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, S. 339.
[2] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 434.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 211.
[4] V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 544.
[5] Ibid., p. 544.

corresponding forms of the economic and then political organisation of labour, in short, in that "the workers begin to feel as a class—as a whole".[1]

In historical reality the different elements of the formative process of the industrial proletariat did not become manifest overnight. Its birth was a very complicated process, which developed over a long period of time when the structure of the new class took shape and its position and role were determined in social life. The course of this process varied from country to country with the historical distinctions of the socio-economic development of each of them, with the specific features of its socio-political system, the differences in the periods, rates and forms of the Industrial Revolution. The working class was born already in its early stage when machine production widened in this or that industry at the expense of the old handicrafts or of manufactory, although the machinery was as yet conquering its field of action.[2] The chronological limits of this period of "fast and furious activity"[3] also varied: in Britain—roughly from 1760 to 1830, in France—from 1789 to 1848, in Germany—from 1800 to 1850, in the USA—from the late 18th century to 1860, in Russia—from the thirties and forties of the 19th century to the first post-reform decade, etc. Nevertheless, however distinctive this process was in a given country, it was invariably governed by universal laws: the emergence of the new social class was characterised by some common and largely similar features everywhere.

This process was composed of two main components: a steady numerical increase in the labour force and a qualitative change in its social status.

The social *sources* of the nascent industrial proletariat everywhere were the early proletarian and small proprietors' strata in town and country, whose position had been sharply undermined by the introduction of the factory system and the related development of capitalist relations in agriculture.

First of all, the spread of machines affected the craftsmen, journeymen, cottage industry workers, workmen of centralised manufactories. The crafts and the manufactories, which were unable to compete against machine production, fell into decay. The mechanical spinning-wheel displaced the hand-spinner and made him redundant, the mechanical loom did likewise to the hand weaver, etc. Under the pressure of growing competition from the mechanised factories craftsmen and home workers sooner or later lost their workshops with their unsophisticated tools, were left without any means of subsistence and

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 418.
[2] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 424.
[3] Ibid.

eventually, after passing through certain intermediate stages, turned into factory workers (or joined the increasingly numerous redundant labour force). A similar fate befell craftsmen's apprentices and manufactory workers: with the disappearance of small workshops and manufactories they lost their earnings. The ruin of producers formerly connected with the crafts and manufactories contributed to the growth in the numbers of wage workers, who were exploited by the capitalists in mechanised factories.

Producers of the craftsman type usually served as the source of formation of more or less *skilled* groups, i.e., a relatively small stratum of the forming industrial proletariat. The main mass of industrial labour was recruited among the villagers—farmers and craftsmen, who often engaged in both types of activity. With the infiltration of capitalism into agriculture farmers lost possession of their land and implements. Having lost their land, these people, who could no longer make a living with handicraft, had either to work as farmhands or resettle to cities (often for reasons of a non-economic character) where they found jobs at various factories, building sites, or joined the unemployed in considerable numbers.

Impoverished peasants driven off the land, landless farmhands, who had lost their earnings after the introduction of machines into agriculture, supplemented what was the main stratum of industrial workers numerically and proportionally—the *unskilled* labour force.

It is necessary to mention in this context the wide prevalence of the "transitional" social category of persons who were half-peasants, half-workers, i.e., farmers who had not yet completely broken off their ties with agriculture but, unable to make a living on their small land-holdings, left their homes for a time to earn their bread in industrial settlements and cities. In time some of them found permanent jobs in industry, and settled near factories, shipyards and mines. In France, for example, until the mid-19th century coal in small collieries had been mined by peasants. According to data for 1823, they mined coal for 150 days a year, in the intervals between periods of farm work. In iron production seasonal, time workers from the villages—timberers, coal-heavers, carters—also played an important part. As early as 1850 at the St. Nicolas works in the Ardennes, 62.5 per cent of the total 800 employed belonged precisely to this category.[1] In the USA half-farmers, half-workers often worked at small iron-making enterprises. To quote the American economic historian L. M. Hacker, "they ... had closer links with the cottage-and-mill system of production of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century

[1] Gerd H. Hardach, *Der soziale Status des Arbeiters in der Frühindustrialisierung. Eine Untersuchung über die Arbeitnehmer in der französischen eisenschaffenden Industrie zwischen 1800 und 1870*, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 1969, S. 24, 26-27.

England than with the industrial Pittsburgh of the 1870's".[1] The category of peasant-workers was also extremely numerous in Russia in the forties to the sixties, when the working class began to form here. Hired workers of the manufacturing industry, whose number increased almost fivefold[2] from 1825 to 1860, were mostly landlords' and state peasant serfs on quitrent. It is indicative that in the early years after the reform of 1861 the number of workers in the manufacturing industry decreased by 7.5 per cent, because once they were granted personal freedom part of the former serfs on quitrent quit their jobs in industry and returned to their villages (in 1861-1863 more than 85,000 persons came back to the land.)[3]

Thus, craftsmen, cottage industry workers, manufactory workmen, farmers, in short, wide strata of city and village toilers, semi-proletarians and small proprietors who were impoverished by the Industrial Revolution—such are the social categories which formed the industrial proletariat everywhere. They were joined by persons hailing from other groups of the lower strata of the middle classes: small entrepreneurs, small traders, rentiers. All of them, Marx and Engels wrote, joined the ranks of the proletariat, partly because their tiny capital "is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialised skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population."[4]

Naturally, in every country the composition and proportion of different social groups serving as the source of the industrial proletariat varied with the local distinctions of socio-economic development. In addition, the image of the groups from which the working class drew new members was often predetermined by a variety of concrete historical factors, including political events. For example, after the end of the Napoleonic wars many demobilised soldiers of Wellington's army came to work in British factories.

It was only gradually, along with the growth of large-scale industry that reproduction of the labour force by the working-class families themselves became increasingly important as a source of replenishment of the proletariat.

In the initial period an important factor in the formation of the new social class was the *migration* of large masses of working people, caused in the final analysis by the expropriation of wide strata of

---

[1] Louis M. Hacker, *The Triumph of American Capitalism. The Development of Forces in American History to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, London, Sydney, Toronto, 1965, p. 259.

[2] See B. L. Tsypin, *Certain Distinctions of the Industrial Revolution in Russia*, Sverdlovsk, 1968, p. 84 (in Russian).

[3] See ibid., p. 155.

[4] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 492.

direct producers. It assumed an unprecedented scale and created an unusual mobility, fluctuation of the population, which was later accelerated by the development of rail transport and shipping. The largest foci of migration activity (internal and that directed outwards) were areas where the working people were in particularly severe distress by virtue of a concurrence of unfavourable circumstances. Among such areas in Western Europe was, in particular, Ireland. Its colonial exploitation by the English landlords and wealthy bourgeoisie was responsible for the abject poverty of the small and smallest leaseholders who made up the bulk of the population. Evicted from the land for default in rent payments, which tended to grow steadily, they fell into endless indigence. This was aggravated by recurrent crop failures. In the twenties when the advent of steamships made the fare much cheaper, Irish farmers began to emigrate to Britain en masse. The immigrants were employed on the meanest and most arduous jobs: in coal-mining, ship-building, as navvies, etc. Quite a few Irish immigrants found jobs in the textile industry. For example, in 1826 they accounted for one-quarter to one-third of the weavers and spinners of Glasgow, Manchester, and Paisley.[1]

Migration as a source of replenishment of the proletariat in large-scale industry was in evidence in other countries as well.

For example, poor people migrated to industrial Alsace in France from some regions of Lorraine and Switzerland. In 1835 half the population of the textile town of Mulouse (about 13,000) were migrants who were "Irishmen of Alsace industry" in respect of their status.[2] According to M. Reinhard and A. Armengaud, between 1800 and 1850 the population of Paris grew by 92.2 per cent, the migrants from other areas of the country accounting for 88.2 per cent.[3] The migration processes as a factor in the formation of the industrial proletariat as a class played an important role in Germany (for example, in the Ruhr mining and steel industries workers of peasant origin prevailed), in the Kingdom of Poland,[4] in Switzerland, etc. Some time later the emigration of Italian workers and peasants, as well

[1] For more detailed information on the causes and main stages in the emigration of Irishmen to Britain see: N. A. Yerofeyev, "The Development of Capitalism and the Formation of the Reserve Labour Force in England of the Chartist Period", *On Chartism*. A Collection of Articles, Moscow, 1961, p. 136 (in Russian); and A. Redford, *Labour Migration in England 1800-1850*, New York, 1968, p. 41-42.

[2] Claude Fohlen, *Qu'est-ce que la révolution industrielle?* Éditions Robert Laffont, Paris, 1971, p. 187.

[3] Marcel R. Reinhard et André Armengaud, *Histoire générale de la population mondiale*, Éditions Montchrestien, Paris, 1961, p. 247.

[4] Beginning from the forties of the 19th century a large number of Polish and German peasants migrated to the Polish textile industry centres from Poznan, Pomorze, Silesia, the Austrian provinces. The new settlers constituted the main labour force in the textile industry.

as poor Norwegian and Swedish villagers deprived of their land as a result of the agrarian revolution assumed a mass scale. For the number of emigrants in the latter half of the 19th century these small countries held one of the top places in Europe, lagging behind Ireland alone. Peasant migration, especially in the post-reform period, became a typical phenomenon in the history of the formation of Russia's proletariat as well.[1]

Women, teenagers, children became an important population group supplying new members of the industrial proletariat in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution in all countries. Analysing the influence of the Industrial Revolution on the life of the workers, Marx pointed out the "appropriation of supplementary labour-power by capital"; he had in mind the exploitation of women's and children's labour, which was "the first thing sought for by capitalists who used machinery..."[2]. Machines enabled the entrepreneurs to employ women's and children's labour on a wide scale, because work at a machine-tool did not require so high vocational training as work in a craftsman's workshop or a manufactory. Whereas a craft required long years of training, to learn the operation, say, of a power-loom a few weeks at most were enough. The simplification of production operations, which reduced the worker's labour to the performance of constantly recurring, relatively simple operations and movements contributed to the displacement of skilled labour and paved the way for wide employment of unskilled workers. It was very profitable for the entrepreneurs to hire women and children for work in the factories: in contrast to craftsmen and manufactory workers they lacked vocational training, which made their labour very cheap; besides, they were more obedient and less capable of resistance.

A characteristic feature of the formation of the new social class in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution was the *irregularity* of this process caused by the unevenness of the Industrial Revolution itself; it embraced various fields of production discriminately, the introduction of machines usually being limited at first to one type or even one stage of production. As a result, along with the growth of mechanisation in certain fields and in their subdivisions in other fields, often related to them, the traditional system of production organisation—the manufactory, the cottage industries, small crafts—survived for a definite time. Even in England's textile industry, where the Industrial Revolution began earlier than anywhere, no branch had yet been fully mechanised towards the thirties of the 19th century: manual labour occupied a conspicuous place in the most advan-

[1] See for instance: M. K. Rozhkova, *The Formation of the Core of the Industrial Proletariat in the Sixties to the Early Eighties of the 19th Century*. Based on statistics for the Moscow Region, Moscow, 1974, p. 53, 66, etc. (in Russian).

[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 372.

ced of them—the cotton industry, while in weaving it predominated in general.[1] This applies to a still greater extent to the other countries where the Industrial Revolution took place later than in England.

On the whole the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the formation of the working class was characterised by discrepancies of stages in different industries and occupations. For example, while thousands of hand-spinners came to ruin already in the early decades of the Industrial Revolution in England as a result of competition from the cheaper products of spinning factories, hand-weavers had not yet experienced the disastrous consequences of mechanisation (the mechanical loom became widespred only from the early 19th century[2]); similarly, wool, flax and silk processing initially remained unaffected by machine technology: here the traditional forms of industrial organisation prevailed, and the workers of these industries remained craftsmen, manufactory workers, just as metal workers, clothes- and shoe-makers, etc.

Analogous phenomena were also widely prevalent in the continental countries of Europe and in North America. For example, although in the early 19th century the industrial proletariat had already appeared in France's large-scale industry (wool spinning factories, coal-mines, iron and steel works), whole industries unaffected by the Industrial Revolution still remained in the country. This was exemplified by the Lyons silk-weaving industry which was backward organisationally and technologically: towards the early thirties it had not yet grown out of the limits of the capitalist manufactory, and its primary forms for that matter. Along with the handicraft-manufactory proletariat (journeymen, apprentices, men and women day labourers—auxiliary workers of small weaving, dyeing, dressing and other workshops), still surviving here was the semi-proletariat (master weavers who had their own workshops and looms but processed raw materials supplied by the merchant-manufacturists), as well as a gradually narrowing stratum of independent weavers, who, as historical records say, "worked at their own risk".[3]

However, it would be one-sided and hence incorrect in essence to depict the process of the origination of the industrial proletariat in such a way as if the cottage industry workers were nothing but a "fragment" of the early capitalist form of production organisation

---

[1] See N. A. Yerofeyev, *People's Emigration and the Class Struggle in England in 1825-1850*, Moscow, 1962, p. 99 (in Russian).

[2] According to E. J. Hobsbawm, the number of power-looms in England rose from 2,400 in 1813 to 55,000 in 1829, 85,000 in 1833. (E. J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire. An Economic History of Britain since 1750*, London, 1968, p. 47).

[3] See F. V. Potemkin, *The Industrial Revolution in France*, Vol. I. Moscow, 1971, p. 94; Vol. II, p. 97 (in Russian).

even though organically integrated into the factory system. In reality the influence of the Industrial Revolution on the development of the forms of production organisation and consequently on a change in the status of the direct producers themselves was more complex and contained contradictory trends. While some sectors of the cottage industry were not yet affected by mechanisation, others were a direct offspring of the Industrial Revolution itself. Among such branches of the cottage industry called to life by the Industrial Revolution was the clothing industry[1]: underwear and top clothes were made mostly by women home workers subordinated to a merchant firm; however, they worked with sewing machines. This form of the cottage industry became widespread in a number of countries.

In any event one of the general laws that governed the process of the origination and formation of the working class from the very outset was that the proletarian in the true sense of the word was, as Lenin put it, "surrounded by a large number of exceedingly motley types intermediate between the proletarian and the semi-proletarian... between the semi-proletarian and the small peasant (and petty artisan, handicraft workers and small master in general)...."[2]

The common features in the formation of the working class, although they were expressed in different ways, degrees and periods in the early phases of the Industrial Revolution, were responsible for a definite relative uniformity in its numbers, composition, structure, and image.

On the whole the proletariat was as yet relatively small numerically. Its growth proceeded irregularly in different countries. The British proletariat was the most numerous in the West. Its growth was characterised by high indices: in 1801 about 1,400,000 workers were employed in Britain's industry, commerce and agriculture, whereas in 1831 the figure was over 3 million.[3] The Belgian, German, French, and North American proletariat was smaller in total numbers, not to speak of the proletariat in Italy, Spain, the Scandinavian countries. In Eastern Europe, Russia's proletariat held pride of place for numbers.

In any event, the steady increase in the ranks of wage labour and, what was especially important, in the proportion of the factory workers in the total mass of proletarians was one of the laws in the formation of the new social class, an inevitable sequel of the growth of capitalist production itself. It is indicative, for instance, that the number of cotton factory operatives in Lancashire was 107,000

[1] C. Fohlen, *Le travail au XIX siècle*, Paris, 1967, p. 124.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism—An Infantile Disorder", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 74.

[3] Roland Marx, *La révolution industrielle en Grande-Bretagne des origines à 1850*, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris, 1970, p. 164.

in 1815 (7,000 in power-loom operation). By 1832 this had grown to 208,000 (75,000 in power-loom weaving).[1]

No less essential was another law, which manifested itself clearly in the initial period of the Industrial Revolution: the population growth in the cities—the main centres of industry—was particularly noticeable against the background of the general population increase. Consequently, the concentration of the industrial population increased along with its proportion in relation to the rural population. Typical in this respect are certain statistics characteristic of the demographic processes in England, where the Industrial Revolution was carried out in its "purest" form. In 1750 in England there were only two cities with a population of over 50,000 (London and Edinburgh), whereas by 1801 the number of such cities had grown to seven and by 1831 to eight.

According to the population census data, in the period from 1801 to 1841 the population of Glasgow increased 255 per cent, that of Bradford, 440 per cent. Between 1760 and 1830 the population of Manchester grew tenfold. This increment was mainly due to the growth of the factory proletariat.

On the other hand, the population making a living by agricultural work tended to decrease. For example, in 1831, slightly over one-quarter of England's population was engaged in agriculture.

Similar processes, although on a much smaller scale, took place in other countries, including those where capitalism began to develop later. In Russia, for instance, where the Industrial Revolution began between the thirties and forties of the 19th century, there was an intensive growth from that period of the cities and villages around factories and works, which had sprung up as industrial centres even before the abolition of serfdom. The Industrial Revolution, in particular, was responsible for the growth of St. Petersburg into a large industrial city. Here new technology was applied for the first time in the cotton industry, cotton printing began and from here cotton spinning spread to other areas. St. Petersburg assumed especially great importance as the centre of Russian engineering. The formation of the industrial centres of Latvia and Estonia—Riga, Tallinn, Narva, and Liepaja—was closely linked with the Industrial Revolution in Russia. For their character their industries looked very much like that of St. Petersburg, although they were of a smaller size.[2] On the whole the urban population of European Russia alone

[1] Neil J. Smelser, *Social Change in the Industrial Revolution. An Application of Theory to the Lancashire Cotton Industry 1770-1840*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959, p. 194.

[2] For greater detail see: V. K. Yatsunsky, *The Socio-Economic History of Russia in the 18th-19th Centuries. Selected Works*, Moscow, 1973, pp. 141-42 (in Russian).

grew more than 150 per cent from the late 18th century to the end of the 1850s and reached almost 6.5 million.[1]

Already in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution there were signs of an incipient territorial-sectoral localisation of different contingents of the emerging working class connected with the industrial specialisation of individual regions, the growth of new and the decline of old industrial centres (for example, workers of the cotton industry in Britain concentrated in Lancashire and Southern Scotland, of the woollen industry—in Western Yorkshire, of the iron-and-steel industry—in Central and South-Western England, South Wales, etc.).

As the Industrial Revolution developed another feature became clearly manifest in the formation of the proletariat: the concentration of growing masses of workers not only in new industrial cities and regions but also at individual enterprises, a process which reflected an increase in the scale of production. Turning to Britain, we shall see that in each of Manchester's 43 factories 300 persons and more worked in 1816, and two of them had more than 1,000 workers each. In the same year, each of Glasgow's 41 cotton factories employed more than 244 workers. Large masses of workers were concentrated in the iron-and-steel, mining and other industries. In the late 18th century there were iron-and-steel works with up to 1,000 workers in South Wales. Carron's iron foundry in Scotland in 1841 was the biggest enterprise of its kind in Europe: about 2,000 workers were employed there. A number of other iron works each employed 500-1,500 workers in the period 1820-1830. In the thirties one of the South Wales plants employed a few thousand workers, just as, incidentally, a glass works in Dumbarton, Scotland. Each mine in the Tyne river basin had an average of 300 workers, two-thirds of whom worked underground. Some 170 workers were employed at each of Cornwell's tin mines.

Much less impressive figures, though similar in principle, characterise the concentration of workers at enterprises in other countries. For example, whereas in France in 1811 there was only one steel mill with over 200 workers (Schneider's mill in Le Creusot, whose personnel consisted of 230 persons at the time), in 1840-1845 there were already 18 enterprises of this size besides 8 steel mills with 500 to 999 workers (in 1811 there were no such mills in the French iron-and-steel industry).[2]

The centralisation of the working population in the cities and at large enterprises was an extremely important factor in the formation of the proletariat as a class. Here, Engels wrote, the workers

[1] Ibid., p. 103.
[2] G. H. Hardach, op. cit., S. 29.

"begin to perceive that, though feeble as individuals, they form a power united". He described the cities as the foci of the labour movement. "In them the workers first began to reflect upon their own condition, and to struggle against it; in them the opposition between proletariat and bourgeoisie first made itself manifest." Engels believed that the big cities played a special role in the self-development of the proletariat because they put an end to the last vestiges of the patriarchal relations between the worker and the employer, to which large-scale industry also contributed by increasing the number of workers dependent on one bourgeois. Whereas with the former patriarchal relations which hypocritically covered up the slavery of the workers the bourgeoisie had been almost guaranteed against their uprising while the worker "must have remained an intellectual zero, totally ignorant of his own interest, a mere private individual", the concentration of large masses of the working population resulted in the "estrangement" between the worker and the bourgeois; it became obvious that the latter was linked with him only by self-interest, only by a craving for profits; the false cordial relations completely disappeared; then only "did the worker begin to recognise his own interests and develop independently... And to this end," Engels re-emphasised, "manufacture on a grand scale and in great cities has most largely contributed."[1]

In the period under review the process of "spatial concentration" of the proletariat was far from completed. Quite a few small and medium-sized industrial workshops with 3-4 to 20-40 workers survived everywhere (mainly in villages and partly in cities). This was in evidence, for instance, in the metal-working industry of Birmingham, England, in many iron foundries in Southern France, which employed, as a rule, not more than a dozen workers and clerks. On the whole, the image of the newly emerged working class bore a strong imprint of the uncompleted Industrial Revolution, reflecting its irregular and contradictory influence on the position of different categories of direct producers. The proletariat of that period, while taking shape as a single class, was, nevertheless, structurally motley and heterogeneous. It was an intricate conglomeration of social elements of varied origin and status, including persons hailing from different social strata, which had undergone proletarianisation in varying degrees and were in its different stages. Here there were ruined craftsmen, skilled workmen of centralised and scattered manufactories, journeymen and apprentices hired by the masters of small and medium-sized workshops, landless peasants seeking a livelihood in towns and villages where factories and mines were being built and, naturally, factory hands.

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 418, 419.

A fairly large group of the forming working class was made up of city and village craftsmen (weavers, spinners, blacksmiths, coopers, knife-smiths, nailers, to mention but a few) who, working at home, often with their own tools, were more and more often compelled to work for wages paid by the entrepreneur, filling his orders. For example, factory owners, operating through their agents, small masters of yesterday, supplied home cotton weavers with yarn and often with hand-looms and sent the cloth collected from them to their dyeing and cotton print works. The cottage industry was gradually turning into an "outside department" of the capitalist factory,[1] while the craftsman himself was reduced to the status of the wage worker of this capitalistically organised industry, the degree of the loss by craftsmen of their independence varying within wide limits. Those craftsmen who retained a semblance of independence were close to this category for their position in the system of production. For instance, knitters and lace-makers of Nottinghamshire, England, procured yarn themselves but rented looms from rich entrepreneurs who exploited them no less ruthlessly than the other cottage industry workers.

The factory workers, even in England until the thirties and forties of the 19th century, constituted the minority of the working class. For example, in the early 1830s the hand-loom weavers alone still outnumbered all the men and women in spinning and weaving mills of cotton, wool, and silk combined.[2] On the whole the factory workers together with the miners and steel-makers accounted for not more than one-third of the English proletariat. In other countries the numerical superiority of the handicraft and manufactory workers over those of large-scale capitalist industry was manifest in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution still more strikingly: towards the late forties in France large and medium-sized enterprises of the industrial type employed about 1,240,000 workers, whereas the number of workers in small workshops reached 5 million (together with their families).[3]

Women and children accounted for a fairly large proportion of the factory workers. In the thirties the proportion of adult workers (over 18 years of age) in Manchester's large factories was 28 per cent, and in some industries was even smaller (in the manufacture of fine woollen cloth—10.7 per cent). In 1835 women and children under 13 years of age constituted 61 per cent of all workers of England's textile industry, and in the period 1834-1847 out of all workers in

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 434.

[2] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London, Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1964, pp. 191-93.

[3] Maurice Bouvier-Ajam, *Histoire du travail en France depuis la Révolution*, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, Paris, 1969, p. 122.

the English cotton mills about one-quarter were adult men, over half and more (up to 55 per cent), women and girls and the balance, boys below the age of eighteen.[1]

Roughly the same picture of the sex and age composition of the proletariat in its formative stage was to be seen in other countries: women workers, boys and girls constituted a fairly wide stratum of proletarians in enterprises of varied kinds everywhere. In 1838 women workers accounted for 56-57 per cent of the work force in the French textile industry (depending on the branch). In 1847 workshops with more than ten hands employed a total of 672,000 men, 254,000 women, and 131,000 children.[2] Thus, the latter two groups combined outnumbered one-half of the male personnel. Children of 10 to 15 years of age and adolescents of 15 to 20 constituted over one-half of the miners at the Anzin collieries in France. According to a 1843 survey the biggest spinning factory in Brabant, Belgium, employed 318 workers, including 26 children below nine and 35 of nine to twelve years. In the late forties 32,000 children of nine to fourteen worked in Prussia's factories (10 per cent of the total work force). According to information for 1855, which is applicable by and large to the mid-19th century, 88,197 men and 25,298 women were employed at enterprises with at least fifty workers in Germany's eight industrial districts. The proportion of children in the work force of the cotton mills in Lower Austria in the early forties was 25-35 per cent and at places surpassed that of adult workers. In 1831 the US cotton mills employed 33,506 women and only 18,359 men, and in 1850, 59,136 women and only 33,150 men.

Documents of that epoch often leave the impression that industrial labour, textile workers in the first place, were mostly women and children. It also follows from all this that the industrial proletariat was largely composed of unskilled workers. This refers not only to women and children but also to the majority of adult men workers. True, in addition to such unskilled workmen, everywhere (in England, France, Germany, Belgium, etc.) there was a definite stratum of highly skilled workers and a numerous group of trained workers (by origin both belonged to craftsmen, journeymen, etc.). Nevertheless, the proportion of highly skilled and trained workers among all male workers (who constituted one-quarter to one-third of the factory work force on the average) was quite small: it was hardly greater than one-

---

[1] M. Blaug, "The Productivity of Capital in the Lancashire Cotton Industry During the Nineteenth Century".—In: *The Economic History Review*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, April 1961, p. 368; cf. E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848*, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland and New York, 1962, p. 50.

[2] Maurice Bouvier-Ajam, op cit., p. 135.

tenth of the total.[1] The absolute preponderance of unskilled labourers who lacked any production traditions and had already lost (or were losing) their former social ties was a characteristic feature of the nascent industrial proletariat.

The emergence of the reserve labour force, qualitatively new as compared with the preceding period, beginning with the earliest stages of the Industrial Revolution, was an essential component in the formative process of the industrial proletariat. In its very origin it was different from that which had existed at the time of the manufactory. The formation of a large unemployed contingent now was primarily the result of the introduction of machine technology in industry, i.e., was directly consequent on the development of new productive forces. This reserve labour force might vary in size and stability with the specific historical conditions prevailing in a given country. Mass unemployment, however, became a companion of industrial capitalism from its very first steps. The excess of the supply of labour over the demand for it, the relative overpopulation are a primordially characteristic feature of the labour market under capitalism; it is rooted in the progressive change in the structure of capital—the increase in its constant part at the expense of the variable part, as a result of which "capitalistic accumulation itself... constantly produces, and produces in the direct ratio of its own energy and extent, a relatively redundant population of labourers, *i.e.*, a population of greater extent than suffices for the average needs of the self-expansion of capital, and therefore a surplus-population".[2] The reserve labour force is an indispensable prerequisite for the functioning of the capitalist system. The displacement of the crafts and the manufactories by the factories, the decay of individual industries, slumps in industry and commerce, the influx to the cities of the "redundant" rural population, which could not be fully absorbed by the factory industry and, beginning with 1825, cyclic economic crises when workers were mercilessly thrown out of their jobs was in evidence to a varying degree in all countries, a fact which explains the universal prevalence of unemployment. Besides the millions of persons employed, everywhere there formed a more or less permanent stratum of persons who far from earning regular wages, did not even stand a chance of getting a job with guaranteed earnings. Hundreds of thousands of unemployed became an inalienable component of the forming industrial proletariat. Thus, in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution the internal structure of the working class on the whole

[1] J. Kuczynski, "Industrieller Kapitalismus und Arbeiterklasse".—In: *Deuxième Conference internationale d'histoire économique,* Aix-en Provence, 1962, Vol. 2, Paris, Mouton & Co La Haye, 1965, p. 26.

[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 590.

was characterised by complexity, the relatively small numerical strength of the industrial proletariat, the predominance of women and children in the textile industry, which was least of all affected by mechanisation, the general prevalence of unskilled labour in mechanised factories.

This accounted for certain essential socio-psychological distinctions of the emerging industrial proletariat. As follows from the above, its first contingents belonged to the socially least stable sections of the population—those which underwent degradation under the impact of the achievements in factory production. Workers who came from villages and small towns, near and far, crop farmers, craftsmen and journeymen gathered under one factory roof felt extremely "uneasy". Their mechanised factory environment was alien to them. Knocked out of their habitual surroundings, strangers to one another, they were depressed at first by the adversities that befell them and could not adapt immediately to the new production routine and their new social environment.

The smoke of factory stacks, the soot, dirt and stench of the city slums were around them instead of vast fields and fragrant meadows. The rumbling of steam engines, the noise of driving belts, the screeching of metal were in sharp contrast to the serene surroundings of the rustics of yesterday, the relatively quiet atmosphere in which workmen of artisan workshops and manufactories had worked before. The monotonous work (with short meal breaks) at the machine-tools made some recall wistfully their work in the open air, others their relatively free life in their own workshops where they could plan their work and leisure time at their discretion to a definite extent. The monotonous rhythm of the factory schedule, the initial reciprocal alienation between workers who could at any time again become rivals on the labour market (as they had actually been before they got a job at the factory)—all this caused embarrassment. It seized factory workers all the more firmly that in a large industrial city it was impossible to pursue their former way of life in the narrow circle of fellow-villagers or workmen of the same trade living on the same street in a small town. The communal, good-neighbour relations, the orderly rural tenor of life with its succession of pursuits varying with the seasons of the year and the time of the day and night, the guild traditions handed down from father to son also became a thing of the past. Even the family ties underwent partial if not total disintegration: the head of the family, the bread-winner, be it a peasant or a craftsman, left his native places for a long time in search of earnings. More often than not, other members of the family who had resettled to a city were compelled to take up jobs at various enterprises. Busy from sunrise to sunset the workers almost ceased to mingle with their families. During the day they mingled with similar

pariahs of labour, who were not only strangers to them but often spoke another dialect or a foreign tongue, had other habits and views, followed other rules of behaviour and customs, and held other religious beliefs.

Adaptation to a new, industrial environment was painful also because the majority of the workers maintained their ties with the village for a more or less prolonged period of time,[1] and this in its turn interfered with the firm psychological assimilation of the urban tenor of life, and galvanised the old views and habits.

On the whole, the former socio-psychological stereotypes worked out, on the one hand, by centuries of the "idiocy of rural life"[2] and, on the other, by the centuries-old corporate traditions were sharply disturbed. All these changes in the conditions of work and daily life for a certain time disoriented a person who could not understand his new status in society and lost all hope for the future. At times this state generated phenomena of moral-ethical instability among the workers: for many of them their adoption of the urban way of life meant succumbing to its "temptations", moral degradation, alcoholism.[3]

A strikingly characteristic feature of the socio-psychological make-up of industrial proletarians of the first generations was, further, their extremely negative attitude to the factory. The humiliating, oppressed position of the factory men and women workers largely maintained and enhanced their hostility to the "machino-factory".[4] This hostility was caused by the fact that in the initial period they regarded their work at the mechanised factories as a matter of emergency, as a temporary occupation, which it really was for a number of workers' categories (even Irish migrants at first went to England as seasonal workers in search of earnings). Small wonder, therefore, that in the eyes of those who had formerly possessed at least a degree or even a semblance of economic independence, their work at the factory symbolised a rupture with the past, which in itself was a change for the worse in their lives.

The social status of small producers of the preceding epoch had been determined, on the one hand, by the possession of some property

[1] See above, pp. 210-213.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 488.

[3] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 604; V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism and Socialism in Italy", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 358.

[4] The point of view of those historians who believe that the loss by the worker of the sense of satisfaction with his work, which was observed during the Industrial Revolution, was the psychological result of the technical revolution alone, considered out of connection with the development of capitalism is indisputably erroneous (Eduard Dolléans et Gerard Dehove, *Histoire du travail en France*, t. 1. *Des origines à 1919*, Éditions Domat Montchrestien, Paris, 1953, p. 149-150).

and, on the other hand, by the special character of labour with which they earned their means of subsistence. Indeed, the craftsmen of the medieval workshops "had an interest in their special work and in proficiency in it, which was capable of rising to a limited artistic sense. For this very reason, however, every medieval craftsman was completely absorbed in his work to which he had a complacent servile relationship..."[1]. The work of a manufactory workman, although it retained in part its medieval character (because it was skilled manual work performed, it is true, by a detail worker), in principle, however, ceased to excite a professional interest from the worker, because the labour process here was depersonalised and no longer contained the creative element; what was more, it crippled the "quick-fingered" worker physically.

In the factory the last elements of artistic handicraft vanished completely. The instrument coming in direct contact with the object of labour during its machine-factory processing became a tool of the machine, not of the worker who was only to watch the movements of the working tools as a living appendage to an inanimate mechanism. As evidenced by a document referring to 1819, the entrepreneurs "were accustomed to regarding the workers and children at their disposal as accessories to the machine ... it was enough for them to possess reason to the degree required for the body not to grow lazy and for the hands to make useful motions."[2] In the conditions of capitalistically organised production labour lost its former content ascending to the medieval craft and hence its attractiveness: the product of labour ceased to bear an imprint of the individuality of the workman, to be the embodiment of his habits, tastes, and working time, as it had been before, when labour had not "yet reached the stage of *indifference* to its content".[3] The exploited factory worker lost an interest in the process of work. Marx and Engels wrote of the contemporary worker indifferent to his work.[4] At the same time, the factory worker in contrast to his predecessors did not possess any property, which would guarantee him a modicum of independence from the capitalist.

All this taken together was regarded by the first generations of industrial workers as a sharp degradation of their social status. For this reason the factories were in bad repute among the peasants and craftsmen, as "poorhouses", and factory work itself was even considered blameworthy in their midst. Hence the difficulties experienced by the entrepreneurs in supplying manpower to the factories they had

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 66.
[2] J. Kuczynski, *Les origines de la classe ouvrière*, Vérone, 1967, p 40
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 286.
[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 66.

just founded. This was the case not only in England where the manufacturers had to rely mostly on migrant Irish labour,[1] but also in France[2] and Switzerland.[3] To a still greater extent the abhorrence of the factory was prevalent among farmers and craftsmen in the USA, where in the conditions of a constant manpower shortage the opportunities for a "social choice" were wider. Contrary to the allegations of apologists of American capitalism, like M. T. Copeland, who wrote that sons and daughters of craftsmen and farmers worked at factories willingly, that "no stigma was attached to work of this sort", that "it was looked upon with favor",[4] in reality the manufacturers here as well, in recruiting manpower, had to overcome the frank or concealed instinctive disgust for factory work in farmers' and craftsmen's families. Recalling how farmers' and craftsmen's children attracted by rumours about high earnings at the factories in the early thirties invaded this Yankee Eldorado (meaning Lowell), a labour union delegate bitterly complained in 1834 that actual necessity "taught these children to become obedient instruments of the employers, who oppressed and exploited them."[5] New York's workmen complained in the early forties that "the capitalists have taken to bossing all the mechanical trades, while the practical mechanic has become a journeyman, subject to be discharged at every pretended 'miff' of his purse-proud employer".[6] Some time later, another group of New York craftsmen, who were highly skilled pianoforte makers, expressed their apprehensions of the spread of factory industry, declaring that a daily wage was equivalent to slavery, that it meant degradation in opposition to "their feelings of independence and self-respect".[7]

It was only upon the completion of the Industrial Revolution that the social image of the proletariat underwent essential changes. In

---

[1] Arthur Redford, *Labour Migration in England, 1800-1850*, New York, 1968, p. 140; *The Economic History of England (1760-1860)*, London, 1948, p. 79 sq; Reinhard Bendix, *Herrschaft und Industriearbeit. Untersuchungen über Liberalismus und Autokratie in der Geschichte der Industrialisierung*, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Frankfurt am Main, 1960, S. 61.

[2] J. Kuczynski, *Les origines de la classe ouvrière*, p. 70.

[3] Erich Gruner, *Die Arbeiter in der Schweiz im 19. Jahrhundert. Soziale Lage, Organisation, Verhältnis zu Arbeitgeber und Staat*, Francke Verlag Bern, 1968, S. 84.

[4] Melvin Thomas Copeland, *The Cotton Manufacturing Industry of the United States*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1923, p. 12.

[5] Quoted from J. Kuczynski, op. cit., p. 72.

[6] *New York State Mechanic*, September 10, 1842.—In: Norman Ware, *The Industrial Worker 1840-1860. The Reaction of American Industrial Society to the Advance of the Industrial Revolution*, Gloucester, Mass., Peter Smith, 1959, p. XIV.

[7] *New York Daily Tribune*, March 22, 1854.—In: Norman Ware, op. cit., pp. XIV-XV.

that period the proportion of craftsman-type workers and peasant-workers connected with agriculture gradually decreased and, conversely, the proportion of workers strongly linked with factory production increased from generation to generation. Categories of workers of different origin merged in the factory melting-pot into a single alloy. It was only then that the industrial proletariat proper outnumbered the craftsmen and manufactory workmen and, correspondingly, along with the growth of the class self-awareness the negative attitude to the factories, hidden or expressed openly, gave place to an understanding of the need for a struggle against the capitalist system.

THE DISTINCTIONS OF THE FORMATIVE PROCESS IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

The above-mentioned features were characteristic to a varying extent of the emergence of the industrial proletariat in all countries where the Industrial Revolution occurred in the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century. At the same time, its formation in individual countries, although it had common elements which indisputably played the leading part in this process, had important distinctions conditioned by the specific traits of the socio-economic history a given country (or a group of countries).

In England, the Industrial Revolution began a long time after the victory of the bourgeois revolution and the capitalist relations of production became predominant. It was carried out here in a pure capitalist form, embracing the most completely all the spheres of the economy already freed in the main from their feudal fetters and developing at a fairly fast rate. England was a classic country of the Industrial Revolution.[1] Naturally, the general laws of the formation of the working class assumed an extremely clearcut and consistent expression there. This was the first and main characteristic of the formation of the English industrial proletariat.

Another specific feature of the emergence of the English working class was that the main source of its recruitment was the peasantry, which, in contrast to all other countries, had been subjected to complete expropriation in the epoch of the Industrial Revolution. In the 18th and early 19th centuries the peasants' eviction from the land assumed maximum scope with the introduction of the so-called parliamentary enclosures. The peasants as a class were completely removed from the scene. Hundreds of thousands of peasants who had lost their arable land and the right to use communal lands became destitute paupers. This pauperised peasantry formed the bulk of the reserve labour

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 307.

force, from which entrepreneurs derived permanent wage labour for their manufactories and factories. Part of such pauperised peasants lived from hand to mouth by odd jobs for some time, others were gathered in workhouses, whose number reached 400 in the early 19th century.[1] A large mass of the village poor turned into farmhands serving the needs of agriculture reorganised on the capitalist lines.

In that period large farmers' households increasingly displaced small landownership. They used improved implements and introduced machines (seeding and threshing machines, etc.), advanced methods of soil cultivation, and widely employed farm hands from among landless peasants. Towards the early thirties the large farm exploiting wage labour became the leading form of management of agriculture. According to the 1831 census, wage labour was used on 144,600 farms employing a total of 686,000 workers. In this way, the agricultural proletariat took shape alongside of the industrial proletariat.

Enclosures had also an important role to play in shaping the destiny of the village crafts, which were another source of recruitment of the industrial proletariat. In the conditions of competition from factory production the village crafts fell into decay. The craftsman (spinner, weaver, etc.) deprived not only of arable land, a kitchen-garden but also of a common pasture for livestock was absolutely helpless before the buyer-up or in an unfavourable economic situation. In the early decades of the 19th century the village crafts became an appendage to the capitalist factory, and the village craftsmen themselves, if they did not starve to death, turned into workers of a capitalistically organised cottage industry, who differed but little in their social status from factory workers.

The tragic fate of the English (just as the Scottisch and especially the Irish) peasants and village craftsmen, in first place the hand spinners and weavers who fell victims to the Industrial Revolution, made in a certain sense a unique page in the social history of the emergent working class: such a fate befell the peasants and village craftsmen on such a gigantic scale only in this country.

Finally, the emergence of the industrial proletariat in England had yet another distinctive feature connected with those just mentioned: it was born here earlier than anywhere else, grew in numbers at a very fast rate, concentrated in large capitalist enterprises, in cities and towns with great intensity so that by the early thirties of the 19th century it had already grown into a social force of fairly great numbers and power.

The social composition of the English proletariat was very motley, just as anywhere in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution:

---

[1] M. Blaug, "Myth of the Old Poor Law and the Making of the New".—In: *Journal of Economic History*. Vol. XXIII, No. 2, June 1963, p. 157.

along with the factory and other workers of large-scale capitalist industry (steel-makers, miners), who still constituted the minority of the proletariat, it included manufactory workers employed at centralised enterprises and in the cottage industry: the Lancashire hand-loom woollen and cotton weavers, Leicester knitters, Sheffield knife-smiths and nailers from the Black Country with the centre at Birmingham, which was so called for its pollution with smoke and soot from the steel works and coal-mines, etc. In addition, there were quite a few skilled journeymen, who worked in small artisan workshops where apprentices were also recruited. There was, finally, the village proletariat of fairly large numbers. All these heterogeneous elements sooner or later drew closer in their status to the workers in large-scale production and merged into a common social category—the working class. As a result, the factory worker gradually became the most important figure among the proletarians (from the viewpoint of the subsequent development of the class as a whole).

The formation of the working class in *France* was clearly affected by the slow rates of the Industrial Revolution. It began to show only shortly before the bourgeois revolution of 1789-1794 (the first cotton-spinning mills); however, it was only after the abolition of the feudal order that noticeable successes were achieved in the development of industry. In the period of the Restoration and the July monarchy factory cotton-spinning became widespread, flax- and wool-spinning, as well as cotton-weaving and cloth factories appeared; in the late 18th century large-scale entrepreneurship began to arise in the coal industry and in 1815 in the iron-and-steel industry. Nevertheless, in the level and rates of industrial growth France lagged behind England. Whereas in England 1,200 steam-engines had been introduced even before 1800,[1] and in the early 19th century the construction of factories with water-driven engines ceased altogether, in France there were only 15 steam-engines in 1810, and in 1820 65 steam-engines were used in the mines but they were still rare; towards 1830 the total number of machines had increased to 2,450 and only towards 1848 it had approached 5,000.[2] Even in the cotton industry, which was the most mechanised, machines were often driven by horse traction or water power. The length of the railways in France in 1840 was slightly more than one-third of that in England. While in England the annual average increment in industrial output

[1] J. R. Harris, "The Employment of Steam Power in the Eighteenth Century".—In: *History*, Vol. LII, No. 175, June 1967, p. 147. London, Published by The Historical Association.

[2] E. Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières et de l'industrie en France de 1789 à 1870*, t. 1, Paris, Arthur Rousseau, Éditeur, 1903, p. 627; t. 2, Paris, 1904, p. 171.

was 3.65 per cent in the period 1815-1840, in France between 1815 and 1845 it reached a mere 2.98 per cent.[1]

Naturally, in that situation the industrial proletariat which had formed in the country was inferior to England's both in rates of development and in numbers. According to the 1826 census the industrial population (workers and their families) of France was 4,300,000, i.e., 13 per cent of the total. According to data for 1847, more than one million persons were employed in industrial establishments with over ten workers, while the workmen of small workshops (journeymen and craftsmen) totalled 5 million (together with their families). The proportion of those employed in industry was 18 per cent of the total population.[2]

The slow rates of the formation and the relatively small numerical strength of the concentrated industrial proletariat in France are largely attributable to the fact that in contrast to England France remained a peasant country in the early stage of the Industrial Revolution. For decades propertied peasants and lease-holders constituted the main population category. For example, in 1826 out of the 31,850,000 Frenchmen and women 22,250,000 were villagers. In the conditions of growing capitalism in the villages the peasant parcel grew smaller, and part of the peasants were pauperised and proletarianised. However, even when they had become half-beggars, they tenaciously clung to their own or leased plot of land, however tiny. For impoverished crop farmers work in industry was but a seasonal sideline. The main life goal of a poor villager, who had for decades denied himself the most necessary things, was to buy a plot of land.[3]

The existence of a multi-million peasantry attached to property in land, which only gradually underwent differentiation and abandoned agriculture, not always for good for that matter, retarded the growth of the industrial proletariat. French industry experienced an acute shortage of manpower: for instance, it caused stoppages in coal-mining in certain areas in 1834-1848.[4]

The distinctive character of the formation and consequently the composition of the proletariat was also determined by the great viability of the crafts and the manufactories due to the slow progress of the Industrial Revolution in France. In addition to large-scale factory production which was gradually gaining ground, there were

[1] Maurice Lévy-Leboyer, "La croissance économique en France au XIX^e siècle. Résultats préliminaires".—In: *Annales Economies. Sociétés. Civilisations*, N. 4, Juillet-Août, 1968, p. 793.

[2] Jean-Pierre Aguet, *Contribution a l'histoire du mouvement ouvrier français. Les grèves sous la Monarchie de Juillet (1830-1847)*, Librairie E. Droz, Genève, 1954, p. IX; M. Bouvier-Ajam, op. cit., p. 122.

[3] See F. V. Potemkin, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 213, 237; Vol. II, p. 69.

[4] Bertrand Gille, *Recherches sur la formation de la grande enterprise capitaliste (1815-1848)*, Paris, 1959, p. 41.

a multitude of small craftsmen's workshops and city and village manufactories of various types: according to industrial statistics, in the forties 3,800,000 workmen were employed "in the arts and crafts". The crafts and the manufactories, just as the cottage industry, remained the most prevalent forms of industrial activity. This applied, of course, primarily to the traditional branches of light industry long extant in France (clothes and shoe-making, haberdashery, jewellery, artistically finished furniture, luxury articles, cosmetics, book printing), but also to many other fields of production. Concentration in the textile industry also proceeded slowly and was fairly small. The number of workers in a cotton- and wool-spinning factory in the forties was not more than 60-70 on the average, and in a weaving mill rarely exceeded 30-40. Silk-weaving preserved its "antiquated", primitive manufactory image. The artisan trades and forms of organisation constituted the basis of the construction business. The archaic principles of production organisation survived in the industries already invaded by machines, side by side with large-scale capitalist industry.

Large enterprises existed in the coal-mining and iron-and-steel industry, but even in iron foundries an average of 50 workers were usually employed. True, in the thirties and forties there were large iron works with as many as 500 and even 1,000 employees (the works at Commentry).[1] At the same time, about one hundred so-called Catalonian works existed in Southern France, each employing not more than ten persons. These were, in effect, smithy manufactories using mechanised operations. All in all, there were 6,000 workshop-type enterprises with over 20 employees in each, and more than 3,200 with over 50 in France in that period.[2]

The degree of urbanisation in France was smaller than in England: for example, in the Restoration period the overwhelming majority of the cities had no more than 20,000 residents, and only three had a population of over 100,000 (Paris, Lyons, Marseilles).[3]

The aforesaid circumstances were responsible for the greater dispersion of the French proletariat (as compared with the English). A fairly large proportion of it was composed of workers of manufactories and the cottage industry, craftsman-type workmen—apprentices and journeymen (partners), who preserved medieval traditions, as well as semi-proletarians (exemplified by part of the Lyons weavers who did not employ hired labour) and worker-peasants (ore-miners,

[1] G. H. Hardach, op. cit., S. 30, Tabelle I, 12.

[2] Peter N. Stearns, "Patterns of Industrial Strike Activity in France During the July Monarchy".—In:. *Quantitative History. Selected Readings in the Quantitative Analysis of Historical Data*, The Dorsey Press, Homewood, Illinois, 1969, p. 228.

[3] Jean Bron, "Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français", Tome I, *Le droit à l'existence. Du début du XIXe siècle à 1884*, Les éditions ouvrières, Paris, 1968, p. 28.

wood-cutters, coal-heavers, etc.). The proportion of workers of large capitalist factories and works in the total mass of proletarians was relatively small.

Thus, in social composition the French proletariat was rather strongly diluted with newcomers from the midst of the petty bourgeoisie or with workers close to them in status (because workshops employing a few workmen still remained the predominant type of enterprise).[1]

The Industrial Revolution in *Germany* began in the main in the 1830s. It was at that time that the industrial proletariat was born here. Its formation proceeded more slowly than in England and France; the political fragmentation and the system of feudalism and serfdom in the rural areas inherited from the Middle Ages retarded the country's economic development. In Prussia, which incorporated the Rhine region, which was best developed industrially, there were 423 steam-engines in 1837 and 1,264 in 1849. First railways began to be built in the mid-thirties; in 1850 Germany already accounted for 16 per cent of the total length of the world's railways.[2] Factory industry (mostly cotton mills), large-scale capitalist mining, iron-and-steel and engineering enterprises developed only in certain areas (the Rhine valley, Saxony, Silesia). On the whole, prior to the revolution of 1848 Germany was a country of handicraft and of domestic labour;[3] characteristically, in 1846 only 4.57 per cent of all spinning frames were in the factories, the rest being held by cottage industry workers.[4]

These circumstances determined the distinctions of the emergence of the industrial proletariat. It grew at a relatively slow rate and was small in numbers: in 1800—85,000 and in 1832—about 450,000 workers, of whom roughly 325,000 were employed in the manufacturing and mining industries. Towards 1846 the working class had grown to around one million members; nevertheless, it still constituted a tiny minority of the population. It was recruited mostly from journeymen and impoverished craftsmen,[5] who flooded the cities, as

[1] Jean Bruhat, "Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français", Tome premier, *Des origines a la révolte des canuts*, Éditions sociales, Paris, 1952, p. 184.

[2] *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung. Band I. Von den Anfängen der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung bis zum Ausgang des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1966, S. 20-21.

[3] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*. in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 189.

[4] Karl Obermann, "Zur Rolle der Eisenbahnarbeiter im Prozess der Formierung der Arbeiterclasse in Deutschland".—In: *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte 1970*. Teil II, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, S. 131.

[5] Industrial statistics for individual cities present striking figures showing a decline in the crafts: for instance, in 1831 there were 1,548 independent master weavers at Chemnitz, in 1846—only 1,344, and in 1848—1,222 (Rudolf Strauss, *Die Lage und die Bewegung der Chemnitzer Arbeiter in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1960, S. 15.

well as peasants freed from feudal bondage. Since, however, feudal bondage, including serfdom, remained in most of the German lands until the mid-19th century the peasantry could not be a reservoir as large as, say, in England, for replenishment of the proletariat; it was recruited in the main from craftsmen and manufactory workers.

The slowly developing factory industry was unable to absorb the manpower released by the disintegration and decline of the crafts; therefore, a large number of journeymen who had become redundant were compelled to emigrate to other countries of Europe.

The composition of the German working class was also specific. Its main mass consisted of journeymen and semi-proletarians, who had not yet broken off their ties with the land, workmen of the capitalist cottage industries (weavers, spinners, dyers, hardware-makers, etc.). For example, in Prussia in 1846 there were 457,000 master craftsmen and independent entrepreneurs, who employed 385,000 journeymen and apprentices. Another 550,000 workmen were employed in manufactories.[1] The industrial proletariat constituted a very small proportion of the workers (in Prussia — 96,000)[2] and was distinguished by a generally slight concentration: in 1846 the average work force of an engineering factory consisted of about fifty persons.[3]

The industrial proletariat formed quite irregularly in different German states and in individual industries. Roughly a quarter of the workers were concentrated in Rhineland-Westphalia[4], while in the rest of Germany the working class existed only at places and in embryo. At the same time, the majority of the workers of large-scale capitalist industry was represented by miners and railwaymen (in the opinion of the well-known historian K. Obermann of the GDR, the working class began to take shape especially in connection with railway construction in the forties, which was of greater importance for Germany's industrialisation than the development of the textile

[1] J. Droz, P. Ayçoberry, "Structures sociales et courants idéologiques dans l'Allemagne—prérévolutionnaire. 1835-1847".—In: *Annali*, Milano, 1963, p. 184.

[2] According to official statistics, factory workers in Prussia in 1846 accounted for 4.2 per cent of the male population over 14, the proportion of journeymen and apprentices being 11.6 per cent, and that of manufactory workers, 16.9 per cent. (Werner Conze, "Vom 'Pöbel' zum 'Proletariat'. Sozialgeschichtliche Voraussettungen für den Sozialismus in Deutschland".—In: *Moderne deutsche Sozialgeschichte*, Hrsg. von Hans-Ulrich Wehler. Köln, Berlin, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1966, S. 122). In Baden's factories 4.9 per cent of the city's workers were employed in 1843-1844. (Wolfram Fischer, *Der Staat und die Anfänge der Industrialisierung in Baden 1800-1850*, Bd. 1, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 1962, S. 297.)

[3] Alfred Schröter, Walter Becker, *Die deutsche Maschinenbauindustrie in der industriellen Revolution*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1962, S. 83.

[4] *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, op. cit., S. 22.

industry: more than 100,000 workers were engaged in building railways)[1].

The distinctions of the formation of the working class in the *United States of America* were also connected with the distinctive conditions of the Industrial Revolution which developed in the main between the twenties and forties of the 19th century and then drew out for several decades.[2]

The causes that retarded it were, on the one hand, the economic dependence of the USA on England (competition from English industry) and, on the other, the fact that the process of the spread of capitalism in breadth assumed a protracted character: along with the development of the capitalist economy in depth in the old, densely populated part of the USA (the north-east), development was under way of the so-called free lands in the West (i.e., the lands forcibly taken away from the indigenous population — the Indians, who were brutally exterminated). This colonisation not only diverted capital and manpower but also entailed a temporary reversion to manual tools: the farmers and craftsmen who migrated to the new lands brought along their habitual hand-driven spinning frame and the hand-loom. In this way, the growth of capitalism was on the whole slowed down, but at the price of preparing for capitalist fire, as Lenin said, "of an even greater accumulation of new and more inflammable material".[3] Essential factors responsible for the distinctions of the American Industrial Revolution in its early phases were, in addition, a labour shortage and black slavery in the South of the country. All this exerted a contradictory influence on its economic development. In addition to the intensive introduction of the factory system in certain fields (especially in the cotton and woollen-weaving industries: towards 1825 the USA had already outstripped France and Germany for the number of power-looms per head of the population), the widescale railway construction in the thirties and forties (towards 1850 the USA had moved to first place in the world for the length of railways, which had reached 4,500 km.), etc., the crafts and the manufactories preserved their great importance even in textile production. Up to 1860 machines for the textile

[1] K. Obermann, op. cit., S. 132, 135.

[2] About individual stages in the American Industrial Revolution see: A. V. Yefimov, *The USA: The Ways of Capitalist Development (Pre-Imperialist Epoch)*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 277-80 (in Russian). For an analysis of the views of specialists concerning the time of the Industrial Revolution in the USA see: B. M. Kosarev, "Some Problems of US Economic Development in the First Half of the 19th Century".—In: *The Main Problems of US History in American Historiography. From the Colonial Period to the Civil War. 1861-1865*, Moscow, 1971, p. 231 (in Russian).

[3] See V. I. Lenin, "New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 89.

industry and metal-working lathes had practically been made in manufactories and craftsmen's workshops. The shoe, garments and many other industries had remained at the level of the cottage industry until the mid-19th century. The transition to the steam-engine proceeded with a delay (until the thirties and forties the factories had used exclusively water power). Mining and metallurgy made slow progress and until the Civil War had been represented mostly by small enterprises: there were a multitude of damp-air-blowing furnaces, which had been in use throughout the country until the late thirties; they were fired only with charcoal, which was plentiful. Small enterprises also predominated in the industries engaged in the processing of agricultural produce (flour-grinding, meat-canning, sugar-refining, tobacco), in the transport and communication services, etc.

The aforesaid circumstances also left an imprint on the formation of the working class. In the early period of the Industrial Revolution it was relatively small numerically[1]: towards 1840 about 790,000 persons (not counting the transport workers, whose number is unknown) were employed in large-scale capitalist industry, handicrafts and manufactories, as well as in construction; in 1850 the figure was 1,260,000 and in 1860 there were over 1,300,000 industrial and about 800,000 agricultural workers throughout the country. The wage labour force had grown to a total of 2.5 million persons by that time. However, the proportion of workers in the total mass of the gainfully employed population was relatively small: in 1860 the rural residents were still in the majority (about 60 per cent), although their share had dropped by almost 12 per cent as compared with 1820.[2]

At the same time, the period of the origination of the American working class was marked by the existence of a fairly stable stratum of craftsmen and cottage industry workers. In contrast to a number of countries in Western and Central Europe, in North America the competition from machines was not so long-lasting and so ruinous for the mass of small producers. It did not entail the total collapse of the cottage industry; the latter's workmen did not experience to such an extent the agonising consequences of the Industrial Revolution, which in the European countries had led to a catastrophic destruction of the crafts, the starvation of weavers and spinners, the emergence of an enormous reserve labour force, and so on.

---

[1] Statistics quoted by researchers are widely discrepant. On the question see: N. N. Bolkhovitinov, "Some Problems of the Genesis of American Capitalism (in the 17th through the first half of the 19th century)".—In: *Problems of the Genesis of Capitalism*, Moscow, 1970, pp. 193-94 (in Russian).

[2] Ibid., pp. 191, 194-95.

The aforesaid colonisation of "free" lands was a factor which safeguarded to a definite extent the American workmen, just as the farmers, against the fate of their European counterparts (craftsmen and peasants). In the United States, the craftsman and the farmer seeking to avoid a similar fate were faced with a saving, although quite limited, opportunity—to migrate to the West. True, until the Civil War of 1861-1865 the Western lands, which were government property, had yet been difficult to appropriate: they were sold in large lots at a high price and hence were largely plundered by speculators. However, already then, in the course of a stubborn struggle, the popular masses succeeded in securing a certain reduction in the size of land plots for sale, the institution of installment plans, and certain guarantees for squatters (new settlers without title to land) in the purchase of land.[1] The stream of colonists from the industrialised north-eastern states to the West increased with every passing decade, and the population in the Western territories grew steadily. Whereas in 1790 only 222,000 people (6 per cent of the US population) lived beyond the Appalachians, in 1820 there were 2,600,000 (27 per cent), and in 1850—10,400,000 (45 per cent).[2]

The West served as a safety valve of its own kind for the craftsmen and farmers[3], accommodating a mass of those "who might otherwise have crowded into the factories 'from the hill towns of New England'", as an American historian put it.[4] Thus, the colonisation of "free" lands prevented a rapid transformation of craftsmen and farmers into a reserve labour force, slowed down the proletarianisation of small proprietors and delayed it by several generations. In other words, the colonisation of the West absorbed potential factory workers.

The composition of the American working class was distinguished by great fluctuations in that period, which was yet another specific feature of its evolution. This was also partly attributable to the settlement of "free" territories, to which some groups of workers who had arrived from Europe (in the Western states they were usually employed as farm labourers) migrated along with craftsmen, farmers, etc.

---

[1] See M. V. Demikhovsky, "Land Colonisation in the West and the Distinctions of Capitalist Development in the USA".—In: *Voprosy istorii*, 1973, No. 5, pp. 101-04 (in Russian).

[2] See A. V. Yefimov, op. cit., p. 450.

[3] See N. N. Bolkhovitinov, "The Role of the 'Mobile Border' in US History, (A critical analysis of F. Turner's conception)", In: *Voprosy istorii*, 1962, No. 9, p. 67, and others.

[4] Louis M. Hacker, *The Triumph of American Capitalism*, op. cit., p. 203. Hacker quotes: Carter Goodrich and Sol Davison, "The Wage-Earner in the Westward Movement".—In: *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 1 (1935), pp. 161-85 and Vol. II (1936), pp. 61-116.

In this context, however, it is necessary to oppose resolutely the attempts of some bourgeois historians (M. T. Copeland, J. Schafer, M. Kane, and others)[1] to prove the exceptional character of the development of the United States, exaggerating the degree of the workers' involvement in the development of the Western territories. According to Copeland, the sons and daughters of the farmers and craftsmen entered the mills "to get a start in life. But they looked upon it merely as a temporary employment, frugally saving their earnings to help pay for a farm" in the "free" territories.[2] Like his colleagues of the same mind, however, Copeland overlooks the fact that there was a long distance between a worker's desire and the real possibility to have it fulfilled. To establish a farm one needed at least 1,000 dollars (in addition to travel expenses and the cost of the land). In the mid-19th century, however, the average worker earned one dollar a day (a skilled worker, 1.5 to 2 dollars a day), and a farmhand, around 130 dollars a year.[3] As far back as the thirties the American bourgeois historians proved that it was mostly farmers rather than wage-earners that moved to the West.[4] As L. M. Hacker rightly noted, "the urban industrial workers wistfully regarded the West as a promised land, whose gates were really closed to them."[5]

Nevertheless, the workers participated to a definite extent in the migration movement. Naturally, this circumstance could not but affect the composition of the working class. Even if workers settling in the Western territories remained workers there as well, since most of them had no money to buy a farm, in any event the outflow of part of the labour force contributed to instability in the membership of the industrial proletariat, which concentrated predominantly in the north-eastern and central states.

Besides the aforesaid distinctions the process of the genesis of the American proletariat was characterised by extreme territorial irregularity conditioned by the unevenness of the Industrial Revolution itself: at first it embraced only the north-east, and a little later, the north-west of the country. Until the sixties slavery had prevailed in the South of the USA where black slaves worked on large plantations, growing industrial crops (cotton being the most important of them since the early 19th century). Towards 1840 the

---

[1] For criticism of the works of these historians see: Clarence H. Danhof, "Farm-Making Costs and the 'Safety Valve': 1850-60".—In: *The Journal of Political Economy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, Vol. XLIX, June 1941, No. 3, pp. 317-38.

[2] Melvin Thomas Copeland, op. cit., p. 12.

[3] Clarence H. Danhof, op. cit., pp. 324-25, 339, 343, 354-57.

[4] Carter Goodrich and Sol Davison, "The Wage-Earner in the Westward Movement".—In: "*Political Science Quarterly*", Vol. L, June 1935, pp. 161-185; Vol. LI, March 1936, pp. 61-116.

[5] Louis M. Hacker, "The Triumph of American Capitalism", op. cit., p. 203.

black population enslaved by plantation owners had reached 2,800,000.[1]

In its turn the continuation of black slavery was one of the causes responsible for the slow and irregular formation of the working class. For example, in the fifties the proportion of the industrial to the agricultural population varied from 1:8 in New England and 1:15 in the middle states to 1:48 in the western and 1:82 in the southern states. At the same time, the degree of concentration of the working class in the USA was low: in 1850 there was an average of 7.7 workers per enterprise, and in 1860—9.4.[2] On the whole the urban population constituted only 15.3 per cent of the total population in 1850 and 19.8 per cent in 1860, and lived mostly in small towns. Only eight cities had a population of over 100,000 in 1860 (Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc.).

Finally, an extremely characteristic feature of the origin of the American proletariat was the strikingly specific sources of its formation: from the very outset it consisted of and later was supplemented predominantly by European immigrants, whose influx had been steadily growing from the late 18th century. The bulk of the immigrants arrived in the United States as early as the forties and fifties of the 19th century.

The conditions of immigration, the social image and at the same time the status of the immigrants underwent profound changes in the period under review. The extreme landmarks of these changes were the War of Independence of the English colonies in North America (1775-1783) and the European revolution of 1848. Before the War of Independence a considerable proportion of the European immigrants had consisted of servants. Later, in the conditions of the Industrial Revolution which had begun in the United States different categories of forcibly imported workers, immigrants with no free status, became a source of supply of free hands on the labour market. This applied in the first place to servants, because for a number of decades the compulsory labour of servants had still survived at places until the turn of the 19th century (in the State of Pennsylvania until 1818, in Maryland, until 1820), and in many states, throughout the first half of the century. There were quite a few craftsmen among the servants: blacksmiths, carpenters, cobblers, joiners, tailors, coppersmiths, weavers, etc. When granted freedom (upon expiry of a contract, repayment of a debt, etc.) many became wage earners, usually remaining in their former place of residence. As for the black

[1] Marcel R. Reinhard et André Armengaud, "Histoire générale...", op. cit., p. 320.

[2] See A. V. Yefimov, *Essays on US History. From the Discovery of America to the End of the Civil War*, Moscow, 1958, p. 209 (in Russian).

slaves, in the first half of the 19th century only a very small proportion of them, who by various means had been delivered from their slave status (release by last will and testament, on payment of ransom, by legislative abolition of slavery in certain northern states), began to join the ranks of the working class.

After the War of Independence when the shortage of labour in the United States caused a rise in its price as compared with the old industrial countries (in the late 18th century an immigrant workman was valued more highly than a school teacher[1]) and when the "free" territories became a powerful factor in attracting wretched European paupers, freemen—peasants, craftsmen, workers rather than servants under a contract moved to the United States. The predominance of proletarian elements became a specific feature of emigration from England as a result of the country's far-advanced industrialisation. For instance, workers accounted for 40 per cent of the English immigrants in 1820, 70 per cent in 1848 and 84 per cent in 1856.[2] But on the whole, until 1848 mostly peasants and craftsmen had emigrated to the United States.[3]

It was only later, when the Industrial Revolution had spread throughout the European continent and a large reserve labour force had taken shape that proletarians constituted the bulk of the immigrants.

The scale of immigration also predetermined such a characteristic feature of the American working class as its ethnic diversity. The majority of it consisted of persons hailing from England, Ireland and Scotland, a large number came from the German states, while immigrants from France, Italy and other countries were less widely represented.

The working class originated in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution everywhere. The chronological limits and some general historical conditions of its formation in certain cases coincided more or less closely with those in evidence in the most developed capitalist countries but often widely differed from them. To a varying extent circumstances similar to those mentioned above characterised the formation of the industrial proletariat in Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada.

In the level of industrial development *Belgium* ranked second after England and was the world's second country to have carried out the Industrial Revolution, which had begun in the late 18th century. About twenty mills (cotton-spinning, wool-weaving, linen) and

[1] J. Kuczynski, *Les origines de la Classe ouvrière*, op. cit., p. 30.

[2] For greater detail see: N. A. Yerofeyev, *People's Emigration and the Class Struggle in England 1825-1850*, pp. 148, 151, 155-156 (in Russian).

[3] For more detailed information on the trends of change in the social and occupation composition of the immigrants see: N. N. Bolkhovitinov, *Some Problems of the Genesis of American Capitalism*, pp. 187-88 (in Russian).

works were founded here between 1807 and 1840 by the English entrepreneur J. Cockerill alone, a man credited with the beginning of industrialisation in that country. In the thirties and forties quite a few large textile mills and iron works with hundreds of workers, large coal-mines (Borinage and others), etc., already existed in Belgium. According to a 1846 census, 660,000 persons were employed in Belgian industry and a little over one million in agriculture, including village craftsmen (the cottage industry).[1]

Relatively early industrialisation was also characteristic of *Switzerland* (close to France in level of industrial development): the industrial proletariat (the textile, metal-working, watch-making, printing, and other industries) also began to take shape here in the first half of the 19th century. By the middle of the century the total number of industrial workers in Switzerland had grown to 175,000. However, even in the most industrialised cantons the factory workers constituted the minority of the industry work force (on the whole, their proportion in the gainfully employed population was 4.6 per cent in 1850). A total of 16 per cent of the population of this category was employed in industry. Nevertheless, for the relative numerical strength of the industrial proletariat Switzerland was just a little behind France, while the proportion of the factory workers to the total population was close to that characteristic of Prussia. A large disproportion was observed only in relation to England.[2]

The rudiments of the industrial proletariat in *Canada* appeared in the early decades of the 19th century. Just as in the United States immigration from Europe, mainly from England, played an important part in the formation of the Canadian working class (for example, 66,339 emigrants arrived in Canada from England; from 1825 to 1846 626,628 emigrants landed at Canadian ports, a little less than in the United States).[3]

In Spain and Italy, relatively underdeveloped economically, the industrial proletariat arose at a somewhat later date.

In *Spain* it formed between the forties and sixties of the 19th century when the Industrial Revolution began there. It was the most intensive in the cotton industry and less affected the wool, flax, and hemp industries. Rapid growth was in evidence in the mining industry (iron and copper ore and coal extraction). Metallurgy and mechanical engineering lagged behind this industry in rates of development. Nevertheless, in the forties and fifties engineering works were built in Barcelona, Gerona and Valencia, and large iron works in

[1] B. S. Chlepner, *Cent ans d'Histoire Sociale en Belgique*, Université libre de Bruxelles, Institut de Sociologie Solvay, Bruxelles, 1956, p. 13.

[2] Erich Gruner, op. cit., S. 77-80, 81, 83.

[3] W. A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, London, P. S. King & Son, Ltd., 1929, p. 143.

Malaga, Santander and other cities. Towards the early sixties the population of the biggest industrial centre of Barcelona had grown to over 250,000, and that of Seville, Valencia, Malaga, and others, to over 100,000 in each.[1]

For all these changes Spain was as yet an agrarian country in the early sixties. The level of its industrial and capitalist development was low. There were a little over 440,000 workers for the economically active population of 5 million. The factory workers numbered only about 180,000. More than half of all proletarians were employed in handicraft manufactories and small, though already partly mechanised, workshops. Many types of production were based on manual labour and concentrated in small workshops of the handicraft and manufactory types (tanning, shoe-making, wood-working, printing, food, cork, and tobacco industries). The low degree of concentration of the emergent industrial proletariat is illustrated by the following figures: according to data for 1861, each mill in the cotton industry employed an average of 16 workers, in the wool industry—15, in the silk industry—20, while the average number of workers employed in an ironworks was 19. True, there were also large factories with up to 1,500-2,000 employees, but they were few and far between.

The emergence of an enormous agricultural labour force was a specific feature of the formation of the Spanish working class. The bourgeois revolutions in this country, far from granting land to the peasants, on the contrary led to the loss by them of both their own land-holdings and the communal lands. Masses of crop and cattle farmers, who had lost their means of subsistence, made up an enormous contingent of homeless vagrants wandering from city to city in search of work. In 1860 there were 2,400,000 farmhands in Spain, who had steady earnings for two or three months a year at most. Industry could draw at any time cheap manpower from this gigantic reserve labour force based in the villages.[2]

The emergence of the working class in *Italy* was just as belated. The main obstacle to its industrial development was the absence of a common national market in the conditions of the country's political fragmentation. Even in the sixties the factory workers, concentrated mostly in the North, constituted a small minority as compared with the numbers of workers in the manufactories and handicraft workshops, as well as workers of the rural cottage industry. Factory workers were also villagers of yesterday. The concentration of the

---

[1] Manuel Nuñez de Arenas, Manuel Teñon de Lara, *Historia del movimento obrero español*, Editorial Nova Terra, Barcelona, 1970, p. 41.

[2] For greater detail see A. Gonzales, *The History of the Spanish Sections of the International Labour Association*, 1868-1873, Moscow, 1964, pp. 7-21. (in Russian).

proletariat was slow: factories with 100-150 workers were considered large enterprises in Italy.[1]

In the *Scandinavian* countries the manufactory (centralised in metal-smelting and scattered in the textile business) remained the predominant form of industrial production throughout approximately the first two-thirds of the 19th century. Nevertheless, in the thirties first mechanised factories were set up in Sweden, in the forties in Norway, and after 1850 in Denmark. An essential factor, which predetermined the distinctive process of the formation of the proletariat as a class in these countries were certain features of their agrarian development. The bourgeois farmer's system of capitalist development in agriculture triumphed here.[2] It secured the domestic market for industry and manpower supply from the villages corresponding to its demand.

In the mid-fifties of the 19th century the number of indigent residents in Sweden's towns and villages topped one million. Since only one-eighth of the population lived in towns, villagers evidently accounted for the overwhelming majority of the poor. It was from the latter that labour was mainly recruited for the factory industry. Like anywhere else proletarianised craftsmen and small entrepreneurs were a source of supply of factory manpower.

In other regions of Scandinavia the development of capitalism in agriculture followed the Prussian pattern. In central and southern Sweden feudal obligations were preserved, and a considerable part of the peasants lost their land-holdings during the implementation of agrarian reforms. As a result, a numerous village proletariat formed here along with the industrial proletariat. At the same time the minority of village workers consisted of farm labourers, usually from other areas, who were hired by landlords or rich farmers for a season. There was a much wider specific stratum of farm hands who lived on the land of their masters and had neither their own field nor a subsidiary plot and were subordinated to the disciplinary authority of their master. Towards the end of the period under review the village proletarians and semi-proletarians made up the bulk of wage earners in these regions of Sweden.

In the level of industrial development the Scandinavian countries lagged behind the advanced capitalist states of that period. The numerical strength of the emerging working class here was much smaller than in other parts of Western Europe, and in Denmark it was even smaller than in Sweden and Norway. According to K. Bäckström, even in Stockholm, the industrial heart of Sweden, there were

---

[1] I. V. Grigoryeva, *The Labour and Socialist Movement in Italy in the Epoch of the First International*, Moscow, 1966, pp. 27-28 (in Russian).

[2] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, pp. 806-07.

not more than 20,000 workers.[1] In all of Norway in 1865 the workers of various industries numbered around 40,000, of whom 24,000 worked in the manufacturing industry and 14,000 in the mining industry. At the same time the number of agricultural labourers reached 113,000.[2]

In the countries of *Central* and *Eastern Europe* the formation of the working class proceeded just as slowly: the Industrial Revolution here was impeded by the historically rooted feudal order, ethnic oppression, the narrowness of the domestic market, the limited possibilities of its growth.

Towards the mid-19th century first groups of the industrial proletariat formed in individual regions of the *Austrian Empire.* Most of their members were workers of textile mills: their personnel was recruited partly among the former craftsmen's apprentices, but mostly among impoverished peasants and soldiers who had completed their term of service, paupers living in poor houses, mostly women and children. However, just as in Germany the manufactory as well as the cottage industry had remained the prevailing form of industrial production in Austria until the mid-19th century (for example, hardware, fittings, glass, porcelain were manufactured in government and privileged private workshops). Large factory-type establishments were few, and they were concentrated in individual industrial centres (engineering factories in Vienna, in particular), mostly in Lower Austria. The economic lag of the Austrian Empire was evidenced by the sharply pronounced predominance of the rural over urban population: towards the early forties 70 per cent of the population was engaged in agriculture.[3]

The most advanced industrial region of the Empire was *Czechia*: the working class had emerged here already in the early 19th century, and in the latter half of the forties dozens and hundreds of people worked at many enterprises. The spread of mechanised factories (for instance, 69 cotton-spinning mills had been built towards 1828) was attended by a mass-scale disintegration of the crafts, primarily cotton- and wool-spinning.[4] The rudiments of the proletariat

---

[1] Knut Bäckström, *Arbetarrörelsen i Sverige*, Stockholm, 1958, p. 51.

[2] Michael Drake, *Population and Society in Norway 1735-1865*, Cambridge, At the University Press, 1969, p. 80.

[3] Herbert Matis, "Über die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse österreichischer Fabrik- und Manufacturarbeiter um die Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert".—In: *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, Band 53, Dezember 1966, Heft 4, S. 434-438.

[4] For greater detail see Jaroslav Purš, Průmyslová revoluce v českých zemích, Praha, 1960, s. 21; ejusdem. "K otázce průmyslové revoluce v hlavních odvětvích textilního průmyslu v českých zemích".—In: *Československý časopis histori-*

of large-scale industry appeared in the thirties and forties also in a number of other branches of the textile industry (flax-weaving, cotton-printing with the centre at Prague where 20,000 workers lived and worked in the early forties)[1], as well as in the engineering, metal-smelting, mining and other industries, but the bulk of the labour force consisted, nevertheless, of craftsman-type proletarians and semi-proletarian craftsmen. In 1846 about 120,000 persons were employed in enterprises with 6 to 200 workers, and over 400,000 in handicraft workshops. Even in the sixties small workshops survived alongside of large textile factories, and at places home-based spinners and weavers still survived.[2] The overwhelming majority of factory workers were yesterday's peasants: for example, in the Ostrava region, one of the country's industrial areas, only 17.4 per cent of the workers came from the midst of urban residents and village craftsmen, 17.8 per cent were former manufactory workmen, and the remaining 53.5 per cent had been peasants in the recent past. Many workers (at some factories up to 30 per cent) continued to live in the neighbouring villages 8 to 10 kilometres away from where they came to work at the factory every day (this situation was characteristic of Ostrava and Brno).[3]

The transition to factory production in *Hungary*, another country under the sway of the Hapsburg Empire, also occurred with a delay. Although in the thirties and forties the Industrial Revolution began in some industries (a number of large textile manufactories were equipped with machines and converted into factories), nevertheless, the domination of feudal relations and the country's dependence on Austria retarted this process. Out of the 242 steam-engines used in the Austrian Empire in 1841 only 10 were in Hungary (towards the end of the forties their number had grown to 40). Many enterprises, primarily those processing farm produce (distilleries, sugar-refineries, flour-mills) and some metal-smelting works, were owned by landed magnates.[4]

---

cký, 1954, No. 1, s. 94-96, 105; ejusdem. "K problematice průmyslové revoluce v českých zemích a na Slovensku".—In: *Historický časopis Slovenske Akademie Vied*, 1955, No. 4, s. 571-72, Bratislava.

[1] Zdeněk Tobolka. *Textiláci. První průkopnici dělnického hnutí v Čechach*, Praha, 1950, s. 34.

[2] Arnošt Klima, "Die Entstehung der Arbeiterclasse und die Anfänge der Arbeiterbewegung in Böhmen."—In: *Wirtschafts- und sozialgeschichtliche Probleme der frühen Industrialisierung*, Bd. 1, Hrsg. von Wolfram Fischer, Berlin, 1968, S. 441.

[3] M. Myška, *Počzatky vytváření dělnické třídy v železarnach na Ostravsku*, Ostrava, 1962, s. 85, 94; A. Klima, op. cit., S. 436.

[4] Akoš Paulinyi, "Die Betriebsform im Eisenhüttenwesen zur Zeit der frühen Industrialisierung in Ungarn".—In: *Beiträge zu Wirtschaftswachstum und Wirtschaftsstruktur im 16 und 19. Jahrhundert*, Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 1971, S. 219 ff.

In the Hungarian factories and workshops only about 23,000 workmen were employed in the early forties, those in the workshops prevailing: together with craftsmen (117,000), and roughly the same number of assistants the total number of those employed in industrial production was about 250,000.[1]

The origination of the industrial proletariat in other countries of Eastern Europe was marked by important distinctions. This process, which has been relatively little studied in the literature so far, took place at a later time than in the advanced capitalist states of the West, such as Britain and France, since in the East European region the Industrial Revolution began later, developed more slowly than in the West and took specific forms. The factors which retarded a transition to the factory were numerous survivals of feudalism, the feudal and semi-feudal exploitation of different sections of the dependent peasantry, the resulting narrowness of the domestic market, etc. The countries of Eastern Europe had not yet experienced bourgeois revolutions, so that in this respect the Industrial Revolution began here also under less favourable conditions than in Western Europe.

In a number of countries east of the Elbe its characteristic features were, in particular, as follows: the revolution in transportation (railway construction) often served as a prelude to mechanisation in the manufacturing industries. A considerable part of industrial enterprises were in the hands of the landlords (for instance, in the Kingdom of Poland[2]). In industry metal-smelting and coal-mining rose to a high proportion at an early time, while the textile industry was often inferior in importance to the processing of farm produce, not to speak of heavy industry. The transition to factory production which had begun under such circumstances failed to cause in the socio-economic structure of these countries such great changes as, say, in England. They continued to be agrarian countries.[3]

All these factors explain the distinctive features of the evolution of the working class in Eastern Europe.

For example, in the *Kingdom of Poland* and other *Polish lands* the transition from the manufactory to mechanised production began in the main as late as the forties of the 19th century (the textile,

---

[1] Iván T. Berend, György Ránki, "Peculiarities of Industrial Progress in Eastern Europe and the Development of the Working Class".—In: *Troisième conférence internationale d'histoire économique*, Munich, 1965, Paris, La Haye Mouton & Co., 1968, p. 204.

[2] See W. Kula, op. cit., p. 91-92.

[3] For greater detail see V. K. Yatsunsky, "Concerning the Problems and Methodology of the Study of the Industrial Revolution in the East European Countries."—In: *Brief Communications of the Institute of Slavonic Studies under the USSR Academy of Sciences*, 1958, No. 23, pp. 11-12 (in Russian).

metal-smelting, mining industries).[1] The government-owned mining industry played an important part in the economy of the Kingdom of Poland. Just as at privately owned enterprises it made wide use of the compulsory labour of feudally dependent peasants, who worked off their corvée obligations in a mine or at a smelting furnace. True, the ranks of industrial workers were gradually joined by hired hands from among land-hungry and impoverished peasants as well as ruined craftsmen seeking earnings at factories. Nevertheless, until the beginning of the sixties compulsory labour had been an essential factor, particularly in coal-mining and metal-smelting. Its forms were varied. One of them was the use of army recruits, another, the labour of peasants who had "voluntarily" joined the so-called Mining Corps instituted in 1817 to supply the government-owned mining and metal-smelting industries with skilled manpower: the peasants joining it were formally relieved of corvée and even were granted certain "privileges" (exemption from recruitment to the army and taxes, free uniform issued by the government, and so on), whereas actually they came under non-economic subjugation just as severe as before. According to the oath of allegiance they took on admission to the Mining Corps they undertook to work permanently in this industry with no right to change their job or occupation at their discretion.[2] In other words, membership of the Mining Corps was but a camouflage for regular compulsory work in heavy industry, where permanent personnel of skilled workers formed in this way.

In addition to this, work for hire had become widespread here towards the mid-19th century. In the sixties the number of wage workers in the mining and metal-smelting industries approximated that of the membership of the Mining Corps.[3] Wage workers were employed mostly as unskilled manpower[4].

Among the skilled wage workers in the mining and metal-smelting and in the textile industry there were quite a few foreigners employed by both individual entrepreneurs and the management of government enterprises. The total number of workers in industry was still small, and manufactory workmen remained as yet their prevailing type. The industrial proletariat in the Kingdom of Poland took shape slowly; workers from among the peasants usually preserved their ties with the villages to a definite extent. Polish historians believe that town and country were roughly equal in importance as sources

[1] W. Kula, op. cit., p. 68.

[2] For greater detail see Stefania Kowalska, Robotnicy w górnictwie i hutnictwie rządowym Królestwa Polskiego (1831-1863)". —In: *Polska klasa robotnicza. Studia historyczne*, I, Warszawa, 1970, s. 60-61.

[3] St. Kowalska, op. cit., s.90-91.

[4] Ibid., s. 74.

of wage labour.[1] Besides, in the opinion of Polish researchers, in Warsaw, for example, the core of the working class formed as late as the fifties and sixties. It drew its members from among proletarianised craftsmen, including immigrants (from Germany, France, England, Russia), peasant paupers, the city plebs, the ruined gentry, and numbered only about 8,000 (on the whole, the Warsaw plebs, including day-labourers and impoverished craftsmen, had about 30-40 thousand members in the sixties).[2]

In *Russia* as is believed by the majority of Soviet researchers, the Industrial Revolution attended by the formation of the working class began between the thirties and forties of the 19th century.[3] These processes assumed great intensity in the late forties and in the fifties at first in cotton production (cotton prints, cotton-spinning, and weaving-mills) and later in other manufacturing industries (sugar-refining, paper-making, farm machine-building, locomotive and railway car construction, etc.), as well as in metal-smelting. Since the transition from the manufactory to the factory in Russia had begun as far back as the epoch of serfdom, the growth of the purely proletarian core among the industrial workers came up against grave obstacles and proceeded rather slowly. Whereas in 1840 the total number of workers employed in the manufacturing industry was about 436,000 towards 1850 it had grown to 500,000 and towards 1860, to 565,000. However, the majority of these workers were not yet proletarians in the true sense of the word, i.e., personally free people. The bulk of them consisted of peasants on quitrent. In their relations with their entrepreneurs they appeared as wage workers, but they continued to pay quitrent to their landlords with part of their wages. It was precisely from this social category that industrial labour had been mainly recruited in the pre-reform period. Large-scale industry workers belonging by origin to the lower middle classes, the city craftsmen, were small in number in that period (state serf peasants working at capitalist enterprises were in effect also personally free).

In the first half of the 19th century wage labour assumed predominance in the manufacturing industry. On the eve of the peasant

---

[1] Natalia Gasiorowska, "Les problèmes de la formation de la classe ouvrière en Pologne". — In: *La Pologne au X^e Congrès International des Sciences Historiques à Rome*, Warszawa, 1955.

[2] Thadeusz Lepkowski, *Poczatki klasy robotniczej Warszawy*, Warszawa, 1956.

[3] For the chronological limits of the Industrial Revolution and, accordingly, for the specific features and time of the emergence of the proletariat in Russia (an analysis of a discussion) see: B. L. Tsypin, op. cit., pp. 10-16. For a review of the literature on the formation of the working class see: L. M. Ivanov, "The Continuity of Industrial Labour in the Formation of the Proletariat in Russia". — In: *The Working Class and the Labour Movement in Russia. 1861-1917*, Moscow, 1966, pp. 61-71 (in Russian).

reform the proportion of hired labourers here was equal to 80 per cent of the total work force (in the cotton, tanning, rope-making and silk-weaving industries). At the same time, the compulsory labour of serfs working in their landlords' and government-owned enterprises retained certain importance, although towards 1860 its proportion had greatly diminished from the previous period.[1]

In the first half of the 19th century, it is true, landlords who owned industrial enterprises often bought peasant serfs to use them as workmen or exploited their own estate peasants as such. Nevertheless, in 1860 there were over 450,000 hired hands in the manufacturing industries. However, in such an important sector of production as the mining and smelting industry, where 235,000 persons were engaged in 1861, the proportion of serf labour was as high as 70 per cent, while the workers of the Ural mines and smelting works accounted for about 30 per cent of all industrial workers.

It is significant that one of the methods used to supply skilled manpower to the Ural government-owned works was recruitment to the army: recruits were assigned to life-long work at a factory near which they were ordered to settle with their families. Another method was the deportation to factories of exiles, convicts and vagrants.[2]

Many workmen—landlords' and state-owned peasant serfs—preserved their ties with the land. Many of them in general regarded their situation as temporary, caused by the need to pay quitrent to the landlord or the state. At the first opportunity such workmen quit their jobs at the factory and returned to their villages. Stable, firmly established labour contingents in large-scale capitalist industry in the pre-reform period were small and existed only in individual industrial areas of the country (the cotton industry workers of the Moscow and Vladimir regions, the engineering industry workers of the St. Petersburg region, the compulsory labour force of the Ural mines and smelting works). In these areas the antagonism between labour and capital became strikingly manifest. "By the time the emancipation of the peasants took place," Lenin said, "this split in the larger centres of Russian manufacture had already been sealed by a continuity of several generations."[3]

On the whole, however, the social composition of labour before the reform of 1861 had a very motley pattern. The estimates made

---

[1] V. K. Yatsunsky, *The Socio-Economic History of Russia in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, p. 100.

[2] R. E. Rutman, "The Composition and Numbers of Workmen in the Ural Mines and Smelting Works on the Eve of the Abolition of Serfdom".—In: *Istoricheskiye zapiski*, Vol. 80. Moscow, 1967, pp. 272-73, 278 (in Russian).

[3] V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 435.

by the Soviet researcher A. G. Rashin present the following pattern of distribution of wage earners between different industries and social categories of the workmen themselves.[1]

I. Industrial workers		
Workers of factories and works, mining and smelting enterprises		800,000
Workers employed by capitalists at home, as well as hired workers in the manufacturing industry excluding factories and works		800,000
Building workers		350,000
	Total	1,950,000
II. Transport workers		
Railwaymen		11,000
Ship hands		500,000
	Total	511,000
III. Agricultural workers		700,000
IV. Other groups of wage earners (Unskilled workmen and day labourers in towns, workers and apprentices employed in trade and eating-houses, hired servants, etc.)		800,000
	Total	3,961,000

The last figure shows that a fairly large wage labour market had existed in Russia on the eve of the reform.[2]

Nevertheless, it is evident that under the system of serfdom "there could be no question of differentiating a working *class* from among the general mass of serfs, the disfranchised 'lower ordres', 'the ruck'".[3] Only the abolition of serfdom converted the permanent wage labourers of the pre-reform epoch into a genuine proletariat and only after 1861 did its formation assume a fairly rapid rate. Strictly speaking, it was at that time that the process of the formation of the proletariat into a class began.[4]

---

[1] A. G. Rashin, "The Problem of the Formation of the Working Class in Russia in the 1830s-50s".—In: *Istoricheskiye zapiski*, Vol. 53, Moscow, 1955, p. 193.

[2] These estimates are naturally very rough. In expert opinion, the total figure is the closest to the actual one. (See V. K. Yatsunsky, *The Socio-Economic History of Russia in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, p. 110.

[3] V. I. Lenin, "From the History of the Workers' Press in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 245.

[4] Cf. M. K. Rozhkova, op. cit., p. 5.

The post-reform period was one of the most intensive development of the Industrial Revolution in the key sectors of Russia's industry. Until 1861 capitalist relations had taken shape mostly in the Central Industrial Region, St. Petersburg and the Baltic area. Now the sphere of the Industrial Revolution widened substantially (not only geographically but also sectorally). In particular, the post-reform years were a period of rapid growth of engineering (primarily transport engineering).

The abolition of serfdom carried out at a time when the Industrial Revolution was under way in the country contributed to its acceleration and exerted a great influence on the formation of the working class. The abolition of serfdom delivered from personal bondage a large contingent of industrial workers formed before the reform period. However, while liberating the peasants from the fetters of serfdom the reform also deprived them of any property in land: the landlords drove them off the best lands they had formerly cultivated and the tzarist authorities compelled peasants to buy out the remaining land at exorbitant prices. Many categories of serfs were denied any allotment of land altogether (manor serfs, serfs of the landless and small gentry, "month" labourers, etc.). Workers of patrimonial manufactories, peasants of state industrial establishments, workmen of mining and smelting enterprises found themselves in the same or nearly the same situation. As a result of the reform of 1861, there arose a contingent of four million landless peasant men and women, and about 60 per cent of peasants freed from serfdom became land-hungry.[1] Possessing a tiny plot of land, such peasants, burdened with high redemption payments, not to speak of taxes, were practically unable to support themselves and their families with the meagre means of livelihood derived from their holdings.

Small wonder, therefore, that the reform was followed by an intensive process of social differentiation and, in effect, disintegration of the peasantry, which had already been incipient before. This differentiation steadily progressed. As far back as the sixties, along with the emergence of a handful of rich peasants there appeared a mass of poor peasants—village proletarians and semi-proletarians. A wide stratum of "workers with land-holdings" and landless peasants was pushed out from agriculture into industry. This was how the main reserve of wage labour was formed for factories and works and for a variety of non-agricultural enterprises. The growing agricultural proletariat was recruited from the ranks of the very same village poor.

[1] See B. L. Tsypin, op. cit., p. 153.

On the whole, having led to the "depeasantising" of the countryside[1] the reform of 1861 stimulated tremendously the further growth of Russia's working class. Prior to 1861 it consisted only of relatively small numbers of pure proletarians (this implies workers with a free social status), whereas after the reform the ranks of the proletariat were joined by workers from among the former peasants on quitrent and partly those who had performed compulsory work in industry. In that period there arose large contingents of industrial workers for whom the sale of labour power was the only means of gaining a livelihood. At the same time a mass of seasonal workers appeared, who combined work in industry with that in their private households in the countryside. Their complete rupture with agriculture was prevented, besides other causes, by class restriction which tied the peasant to his land-holding—mutual guarantees in redemption payments, a special passport system, etc. Among the peasants unable to break off their ties with agriculture were those who as far back as the pre-reform period had worked at a factory and learned an occupational skill there. These workers had to leave their families in the villages and quit their factory jobs during the agricultural season. Many enterprises, primarily the textile mills, closed down or curtailed production during the summer months. The scale of seasonal work is illustrated by the following data: in the first decade after the reform up to 1,300,000 persons annually took permits and passports which entitled them to leave their villages.[2]

The rates of growth of the industrial proletariat varied widely from sector to sector and from region to region. In the early sixties the number of workers, for instance in the cotton industry, even decreased. In the mining and smelting industry which had formerly been based mostly on serf labour the number of workers who had become free exceeded the actual demand of the industry for manpower. In the metallurgical works of the Urals and Central Russia there was no influx of new labour but, on the contrary, some old personnel were redundant: there was no work enough for all.[3]

In the other industries, however, the number of workers increased as early as the first half of the sixties (in engineering, by over 30 per cent). In general, after 1863 the dominating trend in the formation of the proletariat was the broadening involvement of new contingents of fully or partially ruined peasants in capitalist produc-

[1] See V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia", *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 173.

[2] See *A History of the Working Class of Russia 1861-1900*, Moscow, 1972, pp. 30, 31, 39 (in Russian).

[3] See V. K. Yatsunsky, *The Socio-Economic History of Russia in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, p. 134.

tion. Towards 1865 the total number of industrial workers had neared the level of 1861. It was significant at the same time that shortly before 1861 42 per cent of the industrial work force had been concentrated in the three biggest provinces of the European part of the country (Moscow, Vladimir, and St. Petersburg), while the three biggest provinces of Asiatic Russia (Yenisey, Semipalatinsk and Yakutsk) contained only about 0.04 per cent of the work force, and towards the end of the sixties this proportion had remained almost unchanged.[1] The process of concentration of the proletariat was very intensive at large factories and plants, in the mining and metallurgical industry and on the railways. At the same time in many industries, the textile industry in the first place, the manufactory retained fairly great importance in its different forms.[2]

In Asia, as well as Latin America the working class was yet in its early formative stage in the period under review.

In *Japan* which had been in international isolation until the mid-19th century, by means of which its rulers sought to prevent the infiltration of capitalist relations and ensure the stability of the feudal system, the initial phase of the formation of the industrial proletariat began after a long delay—as late as the mid-fifties of the 19th century. That was the period of the emergence of industry after the European model and along with it the rudiments of the industrial proletariat (before that time there had been about 300 manufactories and one or two factories in the country).

The intrusion of foreign capital which forcibly "opened the door" to Japan in 1854 and imposed upon it inequitable treaties aggravated the crisis of the feudal system and speeded up the ruination of peasants and craftsmen who were oppressed by the feudal lords and money-lenders, as it was. First contingents of the emerging industrial proletariat recruited from among the peasants who migrated to the cities, from among the mass of city and village craftsmen, whose wares could not compete against foreign goods, as well as from the midst of the lower strata of the samurai which underwent proletarianisation.

The feudal government and the anti-government samurai groups, in an effort to take advantage of the ties with foreign powers to consolidate their own economic and political position, invited foreign specialists to help assimilate European and American industrial know-how. Mechanised factories were built (textile, paper, chemical and arms-manufacturing), metallurgy, metal-working, and ship-

[1] See B. L. Tsypin, op. cit., pp. 113-14.

[2] For instance, according to 1866 data, the cotton industry employed 94,566 factory workers and 66,178 home workers. (See M. K. Rozhkova, op. cit., p. 36).

building were developed. In 1868 Japan had 53 enterprises of heavy industry in operation, at some of which power mechanisms were used. Between 1854 and 1867 111 industrial enterprises were built.[1] Some of them employed 100 workers and more. By that time the number of manufactories had grown to 420; at individual silk-spinning mills and distilleries of this type small engines were also installed.[2]

For all that until the late sixties the process of the implantation of capitalist industry had not and could not have led to any substantial achievements in the conditions of the domination of feudal relations. The Industrial Revolution was taking only its first steps in Japan. The number of hired workers was small. These were mostly silk- and cotton-spinners of small enterprises; it is not accidental that in estimating the level of concentration of wage workers the initial criterion is an index characteristic of that period: over ten workmen.

Japan turned into a capitalist country after the Meiji Revolution, which had triggered off a series of half-hearted bourgeois reforms, which nevertheless set the stage for the rapid development of the Industrial Revolution. It was in that period, i.e., in the last quarter of the 19th century that the industrial proletariat mainly took shape.

China after the Opium Wars of the mid-19th century gradually became a semi-colony of industrialised capitalist states: they had gained exclusive rights and privileges, including those of an economic character. Gradually China was drawn into the orbit of the world capitalist market. The influence of this factor accelerated the disintegration of the subsistence economy and stimulated the infiltration of capitalist relations into the national economy. First enterprises equipped with machines were established. Some of them were government-owned enterprises built in the interests of "self-reinforcement" on the initiative of the militarist cliques in power: mechanical engineering factories, artillery and ammunition works (in Tientsin, Hsiang, Shanghai, Kuangchow, etc.), munitions factories and shipyards (in Shanghai and other cities). Eleven munitions factories were built between 1861 and 1872. Thus, munitions factories became the first and main form of China's national industry. First contingents of the industrial proletariat also formed here. Towards the end of the period under review a total of less than 10,000 workers were employed in this industry. Arsenal workers were recruited mainly from among the soldiers of the regional armies,

[1] See I. G. Pozdnyakov, "On the Problem of the Genesis of Capitalism in Japan".—In: *The Genesis of Capitalism in Industry*, Moscow, 1963, pp. 409-10 (in Russian).

[2] *Essays on the Modern History of Japan (1640-1917)*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 140-41 (in Russian).

peasants and impoverished craftsmen. Workers of such government-owned enterprises practically had the status of serfs subject to discipline of the cane and severe regimentation. They usually worked under the supervision of foreigners. Nevertheless, work in the arsenals was considered a privilege and workers employed in the armaments industry tried to keep aloof from the mass of rank-and-file proletarians, which introduced from the very outset elements of disunity into the labour ranks.

On the other hand, in the sixties foreign capitalists initiated the construction of mechanised industrial enterprises. Having entangled China in a web of inequitable treaties they flooded the country with their goods. As Marx and Engels put it, this influx exerted the "destructive influence... on native manufactures"[1] because "Chinese industry, dependent on manual labour, succumbed to competition from the machine".[2] City and village craftsmen were ruined and joined the ranks of the paupers. Foreign capital took advantage of the prevailing situation to convert China into a supplier of raw materials and cheap labour. West European and American capitalists started the construction, in the so-called free ports (stipulated by the terms of inequitable treaties), of factories and plants, primarily those processing agricultural raw materials intended for export (tea-processing factories, flour-mills, etc.). Enterprises of heavy industry (metallurgy) were also built, but new construction was mostly in the field of light industry (silk-spinning mills, etc.). A considerable number of them was built in Shanghai.

Thus, large enterprises in China owned mainly by foreign capital were situated primarily in sea-ports. They were few at that time: for instance, in 1845-1867 British firms built 14 shipyards and docks, and American firms, 2 shipyards and 2 metallurgical works.

All those circumstances left a deep imprint on the formation of the early contingents of China's industrial proletariat. It arose partly in government-owned enterprises, mostly at factories and plants owned by foreign interests who held in their hands a large proportion of the mining industry as well. In other words, the rudiments of Chinese industrial proletariat had appeared before the emergence of the Chinese national bourgeoisie. The dominance of foreigners was to be seen not only at their own but also at Chinese enterprises.

Another distinction of the formative process of the industrial proletariat in China was that the majority of the workers remained peasants who had resettled to the cities from the neighbouring pro

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, p. 95.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 266.

vinces only for a time. Workers employed in seasonal production and mines which used mainly day-labourers maintained especially strong ties with the land.[1] Compared with the peasants the craftsmen made up a secondary source of the formation of the working class.

The numerous city plebs: discharged soldiers, peddlers, porters, night watchmen, sweeps, boatmen, etc., served as a large reserve of manpower for the factories and plants. Their position was characterised by extreme instability and they tried to find permanent jobs and earnings in factories, plants and in the transport services. The presence among industrial workers of a large number of former declassed elements lent a specific colour to the young working class of China.

On the whole, towards the 1870s the industrial proletariat remained very small and its proportion in the country's population negligible.[2] Wage labour was as before represented in China predominantly by workers of "pre-industrial" categories: journeymen and apprentices of small artisan workshops and manufactories, unskilled labourers from among the village poor migrating to the cities, transport, in particular port workers, day-labourers and seasonal workers in the villages employed by landlords, monasteries, rich peasants, etc. In other words, the biggest contingent of the proletariat consisted of workers either connected with the lowest, rudimentary forms of capitalist production or with the traditional occupations. The coolies and rickshaws were typically colonial categories of workers. The emerging working class of China was distinguished by a combination of the immense dispersion of the mass of the workers with a considerable concentration of small contingents of the industrial proletariat. Over 60 per cent of all workers of industry were concentrated in enterprises with more than 500 employees. At the same time the composition of the industrial proletariat was characterised by permanent fluctuation attributable to the ties of the workers with the land, their low qualifications and, of course, the exhausting conditions of work in the factories and plants.[3]

The concrete ways of "pumping over" to industry of peasants, craftsmen and city plebeians also had certain distinctions. The European-type free employment as a normal method of manpower supply to factories and plants did not play the leading part in China. Wide currency was assumed, on the one hand, by the institution

[1] See T. N. Akatova, "The Distinctions of the Formation of the Working Class in China".—In: *The "4 May" 1919 Movement in China*, Collected articles, Moscow, 1971, pp. 105-06 (in Russian).

[2] For greater detail see: *The History of China from Antiquity to Date*, Moscow, 1974, pp. 211-15 (in Russian).

[3] See T. N. Akatova, op. cit., pp. 108, 109.

of apprenticeship inherited from the Middle Ages and, on the other hand, the recruitment of workmen through contractor middlemen. The latter hired in the countryside not only adult peasants but also children and teenagers. A worker who got a job at a factory through these middlemen found himself in great dependence upon them.

Foreign capital, above all British capital, also widely exported Chinese labour to other countries: thousands of poor people who had signed fettering contracts went to work on plantations in India, copper mines in Latin America, etc.

In *India* which had been enslaved by the English colonialists in the latter half of the 18th and the early 19th century a thin stratum of factory workers emerged between the forties and sixties in conditions of England's colonial domination. The preservation by the colonialists of the survivals of the feudal system interfered with the development of the capitalist economy. At the same time the involvement of India in world trade as an agrarian and raw materials appendage of the imperial country favoured the formation of prerequisites for the development of factory production here.[1]

The economic history of India had no manufactory period in the true sense of the word: in the 17th and 18th centuries there had been neither scattered nor centralised manufactories.[2] Indian merchants first engaged in industrial activity in the thirties of the 19th century: manufactory-type enterprises were set up for processing agricultural produce (sugar-refining, indigo production, cotton-ginning). Some time later English capitalists and Indian merchants founded first factories. Machines for them and service personnel were brought from England. These enterprises also specialised mainly in processing farm produce.

In the forties a few sugar-refineries equipped with English machinery, including steam-engines, were put into operation in the environs of Calcutta. In 1854 the first jute factory owned by an English entrepreneur and the first cotton-mill owned by an Indian were commissioned near Calcutta and in Bombay respectively. In 1860 Indian merchants opened another eight factories in Bombay. During the next decade English cotton-mills were set up in Kanpur, and in 1859 the first Indian cotton mill was built in Ahmadabad.[3] Simul-

[1] For greater detail see: A.I. Levkovsky, *Certain Distinctions of the Development of Capitalism in India Until 1947*, Moscow, 1956, p. 38, and others (in Russian).

[2] See K. A. Antonova, "On the Genesis of Capitalism in India".—In: *On the Genesis of Capitalism in the Eastern Countries (15th-19th Centuries)*, Moscow, 1962, pp. 186-90 (in Russian).

[3] For greater detail see: A. I. Levkovsky, op. cit., pp. 52, 59, and others; I. Khashimov, L. Shaposhnikova, *On the History of the Labour Movement in India*, Tashkent, 1961, pp. 9, 11 (in Russian).

taneously in the areas of cotton and jute cultivation thousands of small mechanised shops were established for the primary processing of these types of raw materials for the textile industry. From the mid-19th century English capitalists made large investments in India's mining industry.

As far back as the first two or three decades of the 19th century English factory-made textiles began to be imported to India in large quantities, which had a disastrous impact on the situation of the local crafts. Impoverished craftsmen went to work at manufactories and later at factories. The market of wage labour employed at these enterprises was also supplemented by small farmers and leaseholders, seasonal labourers who in search of earnings went to the cities and railway and irrigation projects.[1] In addition to the rudiments of the industrial proletariat, the village proletariat took form: it was joined by peasants ruined by the burden of duties and taxes, hereditary bondmen (farm labourers), communal slaves and serfs. Coolies from China under a contract for work made a fairly large proportion of these village labourers who worked on plantations (coffee, tea, cotton). Indian workers were often recruited also under a contract, and were retained at enterprises by methods of non-economic coercion borrowed from the Middle Ages.

On the whole the industrial development of colonial India in the period under review was characterised by the small share of large-scale operations which existed only in the textile and partly in the mining industry, as well as in rail transportation.[2] It was here that the first contingents of the Indian industrial proletariat were formed (mainly beginning with the sixties of the 19th century). In that period the absolute majority of them consisted of textile workers employed at cotton mills and jute factories. This was responsible for yet another distinctive feature of the emerging working class: its first contingents were massed in a few centres, mainly in Bombay and Calcutta and were distinguished by considerable concentration. Hundreds and often thousands of workmen were employed in individual factories: for example, in 1866, 7,700 workmen were employed in 13 Bombay factories. At the same time there were a number of relatively small enterprises for the primary processing of raw materials (cotton-ginning, cotton- and jute-pressing, etc.) where the number of employees did not exceed 100. The total numerical strength of the Indian proletariat in the

[1] For greater detail see: V. I. Pavlov, "The Economic Changes in the Cities of Maharashtra in the Latter Half of the 19th Century".—In: *The National Liberation Movement in India and B. G. Tilaka's Activities*, Moscow, 1958, p. 167 and others (in Russian).

[2] See V. I. Pavlov, *The Formation of the Indian Bourgeoisie*, Moscow, 1958, p. 139 (in Russian).

period under review is unknown (regular statistics of factory industry were kept only after the 1890s).[1]

In the latter half of the 19th century the proletariat began to form in *Latin America*. In individual countries of this region the Industrial Revolution began mainly in the last quarter of the 19th century. Therefore, in the period under review one may discern in the main only the origination and development of certain groups and contingents of wage workers which preluded the formation of the industrial proletariat and only very vague outlines of the latter. This process ran its course in highly peculiar socio-economic and political conditions.

For a few centuries the Latin American countries had been colonies of Spain and Portugal. They won their political independence in a heroic war of independence (1810-1826). Their victory in that war resulted in the abolition of the Spanish-Portuguese colonial domination almost in all Latin American countries (except Cuba and Puerto Rico) and hence liquidated a number of barriers interfering with the growth of productive forces. However, in virtue of the fact that the Latin American countries became independent when the advanced countries of Western Europe and the USA had taken the path of the Industrial Revolution and some of them had begun to reap its fruits, the character of the economic evolution of the young Latin American states from the very outset was influenced to a varying degree not so much by their domestic needs as by the economic interests of the industrially developed countries.

West European, primarily English, as well as North American capital sought to seize hold of the natural resources of Latin America (iron and copper, gold and silver, lead and saltpetre, mineral fertilisers, various types of agricultural raw materials—sugar cane, etc.). Already iu the second quarter of the 19th century foreign capital began to infiltrate the economy of the Latin American continent. For example, English companies seized key positions in the copper ore industry of Chile.[2] Around 1850 English entrepreneurs began developing the country's coal deposits. In this way Chile supplied "the world workshop", as England was called at that time, with some crucially important kinds of raw materials. A number of other Latin American states found themselves in a similar situation. All of them to a varying degree became economically dependent countries.

Foreign investments were a factor which predetermined the lopsided character of the economy in the Latin American countries:

---

[1] See I. Khashimov, L. Shaposhnikova, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

[2] Hernán Ramírez Necochea, *Historia del movimiento obrero en Chile*, Santiago de Chile, 1956, pp. 28-29.

the industries supplying raw materials or primary products of their processing were predominantly developed. Even transport construction was conditioned by their requirements: the building of railways in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Mexico, Brazil and other countries in the fifties, the construction of port facilities, canals, etc.

At the same time, the ever deeper infiltration of the Latin American economy by foreign capital seeking to hold these countries in the position of producers of raw materials and semi-processed goods and consumers of manufactured goods was the cause of the traditional forms of production relations being preserved in the spheres of both industry and agriculture. Foreign capital protected and turned to advantage in every way the power of the landowning oligarchy which put up numerous obstacles to the growth of the national capitalist economy and jealously guarded the social institutions of colonial origin. This grim heritage of the colonial regime (landed estates, the semi-feudal dependence of the peasants, slavery in various modifications[1]) for decades weighed down upon the economy and social relations, severely retarding the maturation of capitalist elements.

The lop-sided economic development caused by economic dependence on foreign capital and combined with the preservation of the foundations of the traditional social structure, which often retained, along with semi-feudal features, even more archaic forms of exploitation, including slavery (serving, it is true, the needs of primary accumulation)—all this had a striking impact on the formation and the very image of the Latin American proletariat in the period under review. The wage labour market widened slowly, since compulsory labour continued to play a great and in some countries even the leading role in economic life. This accounted for the small numerical strength of the proletariat; for example, according to a 1869 census in Argentina 280,000 persons were engaged in the crafts and the cottage industry, in Brazil in the mid-fifties there were about 50,000 workers, in Chile at the end of the seventies—100,000, and in Cuba, in the early sixties—more than 100,000 (including 22,000 tobacco workers, 60,000 day-labourers, etc.).[2]

Contingents of wage workers formed in the first place in the mining industry, on the railways (in Brazil, for instance, there were 21,000 railway workers and office employees in 1872), in the manufacturing

[1] In Brazil, for example, the number of slaves had grown to 2.5 million towards the mid-19th century, which was one-third of the total population (see B. I. Koval, *The History of the Brazilian Proletariat*, Moscow, 1968, p. 39 (in Russian).

[2] For greater detail see: A. M. Zorina, *The Labour Movement in Cuba from the First Protest Actions of the Proletariat to the Founding of the Communist Party*, Moscow, 1975, p. 33 and others (in Russian).

industry (the processing of farm produce and raw materials), on large plantations oriented on exports. The sources of the formation of the proletariat had many distinctions attributable to the above-mentioned specific features of the socio-economic history of Latin America.

Just as everywhere the wage labour market was boosted by expropriated peasants.

Another factor in the formation of the proletariat was the differentiation of the craftsmen. In some countries, however, this was attended by the forcible expulsion of Indian tribes from the lands they had owned for ages (the Indian ore miners of Bolivia, Mexico, and Peru found themselves in this situation). Moreover, one of the sources of the formation of the proletariat in Latin America was the gradual abolition of slavery (the time of its abolition varied from country to country but in most of them, except Brazil and Cuba, it had disappeared towards the mid-19th century). For a long time free labourers worked in industry and agriculture side by side with slaves. Sometimes slaves were leased to entrepreneurs or allowed to take up jobs elsewhere. In such an event, while remaining slaves of their former masters, they were paid wages by their employer and in their actual status were close to the workers.

To supply manpower to industry, primarily the mining industry (as well as the railway building projects) the recruitment of semi-serf peasants was widely employed in Latin America. Thousands of village lads signed on by recruiting agents and hoping to gain personal freedom and higher earnings rushed to the areas of iron and copper ore, gold- and silver-mining, the construction of sea-ports, factories, foundries, etc. In periods of harvesting and industrial decay many returned to "their land" but later again went back to work as coal- and ore-miners, smelters, and weavers.

A characteristic feature of the formation of the Latin American proletariat was the fact that from the very outset it formed as a multi-national class. The cause of this phenomenon was partly the historical ethnic diversity of the Latin American countries (Indians, blacks, Spaniards, Portuguese, etc.), and mainly the steadily growing immigration from Europe and elsewhere. European immigrants formed the main contingents of the emerging working class, for instance in Argentina. Immigration assumed particularly wide proportions in the latter half of the 19th century (for instance, 230,000 immigrants arrived in Brazil between 1850 and 1872).[1]

The afore-mentioned features of the formative process of the proletariat could not but influence the very image of the mass of proletarians. Elements of hired and compulsory labour oddly combined

[1] See B. I. Koval, op. cit., p. 44.

within it. Hired labourers in the mining industry, in construction and agriculture often worked with their own tools. Quite a few ore-miners had their own plots of land which they cultivated in their free time. Industrial and plantation workers were often bondmen in fact for their legal status.

The vast majority of workers were unskilled. The stratum of skilled workmen was negligible and was represented mostly by European immigrants.

On the whole, the proletariat in Latin America in that period was still in embryo, while workers of the industrial type were just a tiny stratum in the motley mass of hired labourers.

* * *

The formation of the working class was a process on a world historical scale connected with the emergence and growth of large-scale capitalist production. In the early stages of the Industrial Revolution within the framework of the period under review (until 1871) this process had developed, however, on a territorially limited scale; the main area of the evolution of the industrial proletariat in the late 18th and the early decades of the 19th century was only Western Europe and partly North America. The first industrial country in that period was England, where the most numerous working class had formed already towards the 1830s. On the European continent pride of place for the level of industrial development and the rates of growth of the proletariat was held by France. Later, from the thirties and forties and especially from the latter half of the 19th century, the spatial limits of the formation of the working class became much wider. The process of the formation of the proletariat as a class embraced the countries of Eastern Europe and spread to Australia, a number of Asian countries, to Latin America, and later became worldwide. As the general historical situation changed the main laws governing the formation of the working class, as well as its national distinctions underwent various modifications and acquired new features reflecting the development of capitalism itself.

Chapter 3

UNIFICATION AND ORGANISATION INTO A CLASS

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE WORKING CLASS IN CONDITIONS OF THE DEVELOPING INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

In the course of the Industrial Revolution it became strikingly obvious that the "passionate chase after exchange-value"[1] characteristic of capital if not opposed by the organised force of the working class led to an increase in the mass of "misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation...".[2]

The introduction of machines into production was accompanied by a systematic reduction in the wages of millions of workers. The machine reduced the demand for skilled manual labour and hence its price.

The expenses on the worker boiled down "almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race". However, the price of any commodity and hence of labour power is equal to the cost of its production. Therefore, to the extent that "the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases".[3]

An essential role in their reduction was played by the fraudulent methods of payment practised everywhere—the so-called truck-system, i.e., payment in kind: in foodstuffs, tobacco or even manufactured goods (pieces of calico, etc.), which the workers were obliged to buy in the factory shop at exorbitant prices. Another method of curtailing wages was compulsory deductions (fines) for omissions in work (often fictitious) and for any other "offences". In the cottage industry fines were supplemented with deductions for the use of the employer's materials, machine-tools and tools.

In those countries where the formation of the industrial proletariat took place in conditions of serfdom the latter left an imprint

---

[1] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 151.
[2] Ibid., p. 715.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 491.

on the forms of the capitalist exploitation of hired labourers and greatly contributed to its intensity. For example, the employers' manipulations with wages of Russia's workers and seasonal peasant workers in the manufacturing industry and in construction assumed a truly scandalous character. The employer withheld from the worker's wages payments for housing, the days of sickness, the candles burned during work. At times wages were paid in depreciated coinage. Contractors, taking advantage of the extreme poverty of quitrent peasants signed on for earthwork, often paid them with receipts instead of money withholding up to 20 per cent of their earnings and made payments in kind, deducting for highboots a sum double their market price, for a sheepskin coat a sum two or even three times its normal price, etc.[1]

On the whole the wages of the most diverse groups of the working class were below the subsistence minimum everywhere.

This is exemplified, for instance, by some data characteristic of the real wages and real requirements of the French worker in the early thirties of the 19th century. In 1832 Baron Bigo de Morogues by an analysis of the budget of the average French working-class family of four found that its subsistence minimum was 860 francs a year, which were distributed as follows: food—570 franks, housing—130, clothes—140, other expenses—20. In reality, according to de Morogues, the average working-class family earned only 760 francs (father—450, mother—150, children—160). A century later a competent commission of French economists and sociologists headed by Georges Blondel carried out a general revision of de Morogues's findings taking into consideration all the materials (archival and published) collected by that period. As a result, the authenticity of his findings was by and large reaffirmed; only insignificant amendments had to be made to specify the subsistence minimum in individual regions of the country and the real earnings of the family and also to take account of the sideline earnings. According to this revision the income of the working-class family was equal to 790 francs. The commission of notable scientists acknowledged the "dramatic misery" of the French proletarians in the 1830s, the utter impossibility for them to maintain at least "an anaemic physiological existence with the wages they earned".[2]

De Morogues's contemporary M. Villermé, a liberal physician, who had inspected the conditions of work and life in the main tex, tile centres of France in the mid-thirties drew just as distressing bumuch more thoroughly substantiated conclusions than the formert

[1] For greater detail see: V. K. Yatsunsky, M. K. Rozhkova, "The Workers in Prereform Russia".—In: *Essays of the Economic History of Russia in the First Half of the 19th Century*, Moscow, 1959, pp. 235, 239-40.

[2] For greater detail see: Maurice Bouvier-Ajam, op. cit., p. 139-41.

For example, in the Upper Rhine department, according to Villermé's estimates, the daily food expenses of the working-class family were as follows:[1]

5	lbs. of bread	65 centimes
5	» of potatoes	35 »
1/4	» of butter	20 »
1/4	» of salt	7.5 »
1/8	» of coffee	15 »
1/4	» of syrup	10 »
1	litre of milk	15 »
Total	. . . . .	1 fr. 67.5 cent.

However, as it was later found by Academician E. V. Tarle from an analysis of Villermé's findings and archival materials, the average daily wage at large manufactories in this department in 1832 was equal to 1 fr. 03 cent. Assuming that the worker actually worked 300 days a year he was paid a total of 309 francs. Consequently, he could spend about 86 centimes for his daily needs. Thus, many categories of workers could not afford to spend 1 fr. 67.5 cent. per day. It should also be borne in mind that the weekday meals of the worker contained no meat or sugar. How the worker paid for his housing, fuel and lighting, bought his clothes and paid taxes "is a matter for guesses".[2]

Out of each one hundred cotton-spinners, wrote Villermé, referring to the results of his questioning of entrepreneurs and workers, almost two-thirds did not earn enough to meet their immediate wants.[3]

Such a situation with specific variations was typical also of other countries where capitalism was coming on the scene. Low wages were one of the most important factors responsible for the plight of the mass of the workers.

At the same time, in the period under review there existed at times fairly wide differences between the wages of skilled workers, on the one hand, and unskilled labourers on the other, as well as between the wages of different categories of skilled workmen of the craftsman type themselves. The working class was far from homogeneous: it constituted an internally stratified mass with a complex occupational skill structure and social composition, individual

[1] M. Villermé, *Tableau de l'état physique et moral des ouvriers employés dans les manufactures de coton, de laine et de soie*, Paris, Jules Renouard et C^ie^, Libraires, 1840, t. 1, p. 45.

[2] E. V. Tarle, "The Working Class in France in the Early Period of Machine Production. From the Fall of the Empire to the Workers' Uprising in Lyons", *Works*, Vol. VI, Moscow, 1959, pp. 38-39 (in Russian).

[3] M. Villermé, op. cit., p. 153.

elements of which were in different positions in relation to wages in particular. As the French historian Fohlen put it, there were no workers in general but there were workers performing different jobs and differently rewarded.[1]

Different wages were paid both to workers of different industries and within the limits of one and the same industry and even one enterprise. They depended on membership in a given occupational group, the standard of occupational skills, and often on the location of the enterprise and various other causes.

These differences were partly inherited from the past: they were a modification of its own kind of the "wage scale" characteristic of the position of manufactory workers and were determined by the price of their individual labour power. This applies in the first place mostly to skilled labour, which preserved in the main its artisan manufactory character. For example, at the metallurgical works of Fourchambault (France) the difference between the highest and lowest wage reached a ratio of ten to one.[2] However, the level and variations of wages were largely determined by the changes in the scale and character of the demand for manpower caused by the irregularity of the spread of machine production. In the fields not yet affected by mechanisation, where manual work still prevailed, the demand for skilled labour increased (whereas in the mechanised industries it diminished). An increase in the demand for skilled specialists was also in evidence in the sphere of operation of new machinery and in the manufacture of machines themselves, which in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution were built by craftsmen by hand. In such an event there was an increase in the wages of the corresponding groups of workers.

Thus, in the midst of the proletarians there were certain groups of workers who temporarily found themselves in a more favourable economic situation as compared with others. These workers were a kind of the elite of the emerging industrial proletariat. In England, for instance, in the late 18th century the labour of miners was relatively highly paid because the demand for it had greatly increased due to the introduction of machines. In the last ten to twelve years of the 18th century and in the early 19th century individual categories of hand-loom weavers were in a more or less favourable situation, since, as a contemporary testified, machine-spinning ensured an abundant supply of cheap yarn. Their earnings grew fivefold.[3]

Highly skilled engineering workers (for instance, assemblers of

---

[1] Claude Fohlen, *Qu'est-ce que la révolution industrielle?...*, op. cit., p. 202.
[2] G. H. Hardach, op. cit., S. 102-03.
[3] W. Radcliff, *The Origin of the New System of Manufacture Commonly Called Power-Loom Weaving*, Stockport, 1829, p. 86.

steam engines in Soho, etc.) were paid above average wages. "The rapid extension of steam and machinery was not sufficient for the still faster increasing demand for their produce. Wages in these trades, except those of children sold from the workhouse to the manufacturer, were as a rule high ... what a dyer, a mechanic, a velvet-cutter, a hand-mule spinner used to receive now sounds fabulous." [1]

The workers' élite also formed among the proletarians in a number of other countries. Everywhere its members were mainly those workmen whose labour was in high request and who had either not yet been integrated into the mass of the factory workers or held positions of privilege (in relation to wages) among them as "factory craftsmen".[2] The proletarian élite at that time was a very thin and socially unstable stratum: many workers who had become its members soon lost their privileged position and found themselves among the most indigent groups of proletarians.[3] This is strikingly illustrated by the tragic fate of the English hand-loom weavers.[4] The situation which had placed them in a favourable position was short-lived: it continued only until "the 800,000 weavers, called into existence by the Jenny, the throstle and the mule, were overwhelmed by the power-loom".[5]

The existence of a stratum of relatively highly paid workers in the initial period of the Industrial Revolution by no means diminished, let alone cancelled, the afore-mentioned fact; the trend of wages paid to the main mass of the proletarians was in the downward direction. This was the leading, determining trend in the fluctuation of wages.

Further, the Industrial Revolution led to a drastic increase in the *amount of labour* the workers had to put in augmenting the wealth of the capitalist. This increase was achieved primarily by *lengthening the working day*, made possible by the application of

---

[1] Frederick Engels, "Trade Unions", in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Articles on Britain*, Moscow, 1978, p. 368.

[2] For greater detail see: Wolfram Fischer, "Innerbetrieblicher und sozialer Status der frühen Fabrikarbeiterschaft".—In: *Die wirtschaftliche Situation in Deutschland und Österreich um die Wende vom 18 zum 19. Jahrhundert*, Gustaw Fischer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1964, S. 201, 210, u.a. W. Fischer, "Soziale Unterschichten im Zeitalter der Frühindustrialisierung".—In: Wolfram Fischer, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter der Industrialisierung*. Aufsätze-Studien-Vorträge, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1972, S. 251, 254 u.a.

[3] Cf. E. B. Chernyak, *The Mass Movement in England and Ireland in the Late 18th and Early 19th Century*, Moscow, 1962, pp. 44-46 (in Russian).

[4] D. Bythell, *The Handloom Weavers. A Study in English Cotton Industry During the Industrial Revolution*, Cambridge, 1969.

[5] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 418.

machinery, which, as Marx put it, "sweeps away every moral and natural restriction on the length of the working-day".[1] In the majority of industries it lasted from sunrise to sunset with short breaks for taking meals, i.e., 13-14 hours, though a working day of 15-16 hours was also a common occurrence. Sometimes, particularly in continuous-action production (blast-furnace operation) it lasted 18-19 hours.

The working day in a factory was much more exhausting than in the artisan manufactories of bygone days when, first, there had been many holidays (religious holidays added up to one-third of a year) and, second, a large number of workmen had been more or less free to dispose of their time. Upon the transition to the factory the situation changed radically. "In handicrafts and manufacture," Marx wrote, "the workman makes use of a tool, in the factory, the machine makes use of him."[2] The worker was now subordinated—and the further, the greater—to the compulsory rhythm of rationally organised large-scale mechanised production. A clock prominently displayed and a bell to signal the beginning and ending of the work, as well as short intervals became an indispensable attribute of the factory. To lengthen working time entrepreneurs often turned the clock hands back. Some technical innovations were used for the same purpose. For instance, soon after the discovery of the gas burner by W. Murdock in 1792, factory owners, following the example of the English entrepreneurs Boulton and Watt, lengthened the working day in winter. Moreover, factories with gas lighting facilities could also work at night, something unknown theretofore. From that time night work was not something extraordinary. Gradually work on Sundays became a matter of routine. Also the length of the working day was the same for men, women and children. Annual holidays were nonexistent altogether.

The long duration and control of working time, the rhythmic monotony of work, army-like discipline enforced by the entrepreneurs, their managers and supervisors converted the factory into a veritable hard labour camp for the workers. The introduction of machines affected the length of the working day in the cottage industry, where exploitation assumed an even more shameful character than in the manufactory and the factory in consequence of the disunity of the workmen.

The lengthening of the working day went hand in hand with an increase in labour *intensity*. Improvement of the machines, acceleration of their operation, attendance of an ever greater number of

---

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 384.
[2] Ibid., p. 398.

machine-tools—such were the methods used to achieve an "increase of the work exacted in a given time".[1] This process was considerably faster than the growth in the productivity of machines. There are impressive data illustrating the intensification of exploitation in England's cotton industry. In 1823 a steam-loom weaver, from 15 to 20 years of age, attending to two looms could weave seven 24-yard-wide pieces in a week, and in 1826, 12-15 similar pieces. In 1833 the same weaver assisted by a girl about 12 years of age, attending to four looms, could weave 18 to 20 similar pieces in a week.[2] In the opinion of a number of researchers, in the period from 1819-1821 to 1829-1831 the average labour productivity per loom increased almost threefold, the labour productivity of every weaver almost doubled.[3] The consequences of labour intensification were aggravated by the unimaginably hard conditions of work at enterprises: crowded premises; the air filled with miasma (particularly in cotton printworks, in dye-houses, etc.) and cotton or metal dust particles; the absence of ventilation; oppressive heat in summer and cold in winter; the incessant din of machinery; soiled clothes soaked in machine-oil (no overalls were issued to the workers)—such was the common situation at an enterprise undermining and ruining the health of the workers. A contemporary wrote about the workers of metallurgical works in Southern France: "Dray-horses which work, incidentally, six hours a day are treated better than these people who are driven to considerable fatigue here during 12 hours, which is made worse by the heat, which is often as high as 40 and 45 degrees Centigrade, in the smeltries at any rate."[4]

Safety engineering was non-existent, and occupational accidents were a common occurrence. These were mostly arm injuries: the arm of a man or woman worker deafened by the din of machinery and fatigued by monotonous work for hours on end was often caught in a transmission gear. In mines where propping was inadequate cavings-in were frequent, as well as fires caused by explosions of fire-damp accumulations in the absence of timely precautions; smelters often suffered burns, lost their eyesight, etc. A parliamentary inquiry in 1833, for instance, in Derbyshire, England, revealed a large number of cripples mutilated at factories (mainly those who had lost an arm). In the period 1801-1836 at least 185 miners

---

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 491.

[2] Neil J. Smelser, *Social Change in the Industrial Revolution. An Application of Theory to the Lancashire Cotton Industry, 1770-1840*, London, 1959, p. 148.

[3] Cf. N. A. Yerofeyev, *The People's Emigration...*, p. 138.

[4] T. Richard, *Études sur l'art d'extraire immédiatement le fer de ses minerais sans convertir le métal en fonte*, Librairie scientifique et industrielle, Paris, 1838, p. 168.

(out of 15,000) died in colliery disasters in one of England's coal basins; in the Loire basin about 100 miners were killed annually until 1816.

The wide employment of women and children, which progressed with the growth of mechanised industry, afforded the capitalists still greater opportunities for intensifying exploitation. "Differences of age and sex," Marx and Engels wrote, "have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labour, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex."[1] This principle determined the attitude of capital to women's and children's labour. Women were paid lower wages than men, although they often performed the same work. Women's labour was regularly employed not only in the textile but also in many other industries. Similarly, children's labour was employed everywhere on a more or less considerable scale for still lower wages. The working conditions of women, teenagers and children were extremely difficult. It is known that in England women workers who carried baskets with coal out of pits continued to work even during pregnancy and resumed work a few days after childbirth. Numerous facts of the ruthless exploitation of children were exposed by a parliamentary commission in the early thirties, though, as a contemporary noted in its report, "... half has not been told...".[2] Children of 5-7 years of age who had often been taken to factories from orphanages worked 14-15 or even 20 hours at a stretch. They were treated very cruelly. Superintendents often demanded that the machines be oiled while in operation, exposing children workers to the risk of mutilation, cases of which were quite frequent. Those who slowed down work were flogged. Superintendents were especially zealous towards the end of the working day when children were sleepy from fatigue and during night work so as to keep them awake.[3] Those who had tried to escape were put in the stocks. Children working in cotton factories were said to be in a worse situation than slaves in the West Indies.

Legislation on children's labour which began to be enacted in the early decades of the 19th century (the acts of 1802, 1819 in England, of 1839 in Prussia, of 1841 in France, of 1845 in Russia) made but little changes in the situation of children. They were not enforced, as a rule, and were quite inadequate in content (limiting the work-

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 491.

[2] Caroline Anne B. Southey, *Tales of the Factories*, William Blackwood, Edinburgh; and T. Cadell, Strand, London, 1833, p. 48.

[3] Cf. N. A. Yerofeyev, *The Industrial Revolution in England*, Moscow, 1963, p. 159 (in Russian).

ing day for children and teenagers to 10-12 hours, prohibition of night work, etc.).[1]

In the light of abundant material collected by conscientious investigators exposing the horrors to which the factory system doomed women and children the attempts of apologists of capitalism (I. Pinchbeck, R. M. Hartwell and others) to justify the inhuman exploitation of this category of workers by the "captains" of early capitalist industry[2] and thereby to expurgate from the history of early capitalism one of its most disgraceful pages[3] cannot be described otherwise than hypocritical. The shameful exploitation of children's labour by capital remains upon it as an "indelible stigma"[4]; even bourgeois historians have to denounce it in the strongest of terms as "the most scandalous fact" which should be entered on the "debit side of industrial capitalism".[5] For their part, Marxist scholars have full reason to regard facts of this kind as direct proof of the intrinsically exploitive nature of capitalism.

The existence of permanent and cyclic, partial and full unemployment had a disastrous effect on the condition of the workers in general. In the period of the Industrial Revolution unemployment became a veritable scourge for the proletariat. Whereas the workman of the manufactory period still possessed some property and could if dismissed survive on his plot of land with a kitchen-garden, poultry, etc., the factory worker and to a considerable extent the cottage industry worker had no private property whatsoever, and often even no personal property; they had nothing to save for a rainy day, because their earnings were too meagre. The life of the worker completely depended on the regularity of his wages, and he was fully subjected to the "tyranny of the clock".[6]

---

[1] Maurice Walton Thomas, *The Early Factory Legislation. A Study in Legislative and Administrative Evolution*, The Thames Bank Publishing Company Limited, London, 1948, pp. 9-11, 25-27, 61-74; Günther K. Anton, *Geschichte der preussischen Fabrikgesetzgebung bis zu ihrer Aufnahme durch die Reichsgewerbeordnung*, Rütter & Loening, Berlin, 1953, S. 83; Edouard Dolléans et Gérard Dehove, *Histoire du travail en France*, t. 1. *Des origines à 1919*, Paris, 1953, p. 159; N. S. Kinyapina, *The Policy of the Russian Autocracy in the Field of Industry (1820s-1850s)*, Moscow, 1968, p. 410 (in Russian).

[2] Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850*, London, George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1930, p. 4; R. M. Hartwell, *The Industrial Revolution and Economic Growth*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1971, pp. 395-98.

[3] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, op. cit., p. 349.

[4] Jean-Pierre Rioux, *La révolution industrielle 1780-1880*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1971, pp. 169-70.

[5] Marcel David, *Les travailleurs et le sens de leur histoire*, Éditions cujas, Paris, 1967, p. 190.

[6] E. J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire, An Economic History of Britain since 1750*, London, 1968, pp. 66-67.

The uncertainty of the future, insecure life, constant fear of losing their jobs and all means of livelihood characterised the position of the proletariat already in its formative period. Unemployment soared to its highest level in years of economic crisis and depression when scores and hundreds of thousands of people lost their daily bread while many others lost part of their earnings, sometimes half of them, because factories worked a shorter week or a shorter working day.[1] However, even in periods of a favourable economic situation employment and wages were unstable: almost all industries, as well as agriculture were subject to seasonal fluctuations in employment, which for certain trades were of even greater importance than cyclic fluctuations; French iron works, for instance, suspended production for an average of two months in a year! Moreover, there were a multitude of workers performing arduous, unskilled work (stevedores, navvies, general labourers, etc.). The degree of employment of such workers was always extremely unstable and their wages fluctuated. Unemployment essentially contributed to the general increase in the exploitation of the working class.

The conditions of the daily life and work of the vast majority of workers were incredibly hard in those times. Many had to make their way to the factory from the neighbouring villages, because even a squalid dwelling in town was beyond the means of a poor worker. Part of the workers had to live all week long in factory hostels—poorly heated rooms with narrow windows and scanty furnishings. Their abject poverty compelled workers to settle in damp cellars, in unheated garrets, in dirty slums unfit for residence. As far back as the late 18th century the industrial cities of England, such as Manchester, turned into repulsive centres of workers' misery, half-ruined stinking slums overcrowded by dwellers, foci of terrible epidemics and appalling mortality, which Engels, a young man at the time, described with astounding forcefulness in his book *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*. Workers' dwellings in other countries were by no means better. Small crowded rooms, rags instead of clothes, sacks filled with shavings or straw for a bed, often the complete absence of furniture, the filth of workers' neighbourhoods—such was the picture of the everyday life of the city proletarians in the early period of the Industrial Revolution. The life of the farmhands was equally miserable: contemporaries often compared their dwellings to pigsties. "In my whole life I never saw

[1] For specific data on unemployment, for instance, in England in 1811 and 1826 see: François Crouzet, *L'économie britannique et le blocus continental (1806-1813)*, t. II, Presses universitaires de France, Paris, 1958, p. 774-75; E. J. Hobsbawm, "The British Standard of Living, 1790-1850".—In: E. J. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men. Studies in the History of Labour*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1965.

human wretchedness equal to this...", wrote the English radical publicist W. Cobbett, describing the life of farmhands in one of England's counties.[1]

The exhausting manual work in such conditions, poverty, constant hunger, unhygienic dwellings—all this combined ruined the health of the workers. "The world of the workers is a world of the sick," noted the French historian Jean-Pierre Rioux.[2]

The workers' life duration shortened along with the spread of the factory system. Sheffield's metal grinders working with dry whetstones usually died at the age of 28-32 years, miners at 34, Manchester's navvies did not live longer than 40 years, the average life span of a Mulouse weaver was 22 years, etc. Medical treatises and reports present a sombre picture of the prevalence of occupational and general diseases among the workers (tuberculosis, asthma, eye diseases, children's rickets, scoliosis). They describe epidemics (cholera, etc.) which hit vast areas and took a toll of thousands of lives, because the organisms of the victims weakened by privations could not resist the infection. The death-rate was particularly high among the proletarian population of English cities.

It should be added to the aforesaid that in the period of its formation the working class was absolutely rightless socially and politically. Labour legislation which might have restrained to a certain degree the greed of the entrepreneurs and protect the workers against the tyranny of their employers was non-existent. On the contrary, laws directed against the workers and perpetuating the rule of capital legally were passed quite often. These laws forbade the workers to undertake joint actions and set up their own organisations to defend their vital interests (Le Chapelier's law of 1791 in France, the parliamentary acts of 1799-1800 banning labour associations in England, Napoleon's Penal Code of 1810 which provided for imprisonment of strikers for three months to one year and of strike leaders or instigators for two to five years;[3] the law of 1845 promulgated in serf-owning Russia, whereby "in the event of disobedience of factory and plant workers to the owner or manager committed by a whole artel or a crowd, the culprits shall be subjected to punishment for insurrection against the constituted authority as ordained by the government", namely: detention from three weeks to three months for "instigators of a strike" and from seven days to three weeks for others).[4]

---

[1] William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, London, Reeves and Turner, 1893, Vol. I, pp. 21, 321, 348.

[2] J.-P. Rioux, *La révolution industrielle*, Paris, 1971, p. 175.

[3] Georges Lefranc, *Grèves d'hier et d'aujourd'hui*, Aubier—Montaigne, Paris, 1970, p. 26.

[4] Quoted from: N. S. Kinyapina, op. cit., p. 409.

Bourgeois legislation often put the workers in a humiliating and unequal position in relation to the employer. Under the English law on "master and slave" dating back to the 14th century and modified repeatedly in the 18th and the early 19th century, a worker who had quit work for his employer was subject to imprisonment, whereas an employer who had dismissed a worker before the expiration of the labour contract was simply fined. Article 1781 of Napoleon's Civil Code of 1804 laid down the employer's preferential rights in relation to the worker in questions of wage payments: "The employer shall be trusted in his assertions concerning the wage rates, the payment of wages for the past year and remuneration for the current year."[1] As the French Communist historian Jean Bruhat rightly noted, this article in the Code sacrificed to the bourgeoisie not only social equality but also civil equality so zealously proclaimed in the years of the revolution of the late 18th century.[2]

In the 18th century and the early decades of the 19th century it became a matter of routine in many countries to issue to workers special labour cards by means of which employers tried to tie the workers to their factories and keep them under their heel. Not infrequently these cards were used as a means of establishing police surveillance over the workers.

In the situation of social rightlessness the entrepreneurs and their managers maintained a crude arbitrary rule which was often aggravated by stringent police surveillance, a system of black-listing (for instance, in the USA)[3], etc.

Social rightlessness as a characteristic feature of the position of the emerging working class became strikingly manifest in the countries where the Industrial Revolution was taking place in conditions of the feudal system and where hired workers (not to speak of those working under coercion) were not yet legally free sellers of their labour power. The vast majority of hired workmen in Russia, for instance, were peasants allowed to work at factories and plants on condition of payment of quitrent to their landlords or the state treasury. They were subjected to dual exploitation: the burden of capitalist oppression was aggravated by the burden of service to the feudal lords. Although these workers were not subject to the jurisdiction of the entrepreneurs (in contrast to the serf workmen of patrimonial factories), they had no social rights whatsoever. A delay in the payment of quitrent entailed the appropriation of the wages of the peasant on quitrent by the landlord and sometimes a recall to the village followed by a transfer to corvée. Hired labourers just

[1] *Code civil*, Paris, Librairie Dalloz, 1928, p. 665[a].

[2] Jean Bruhat, *Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français*, op. cit., p. 166.

[3] See Ph. S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Vol. I, New York, 1947, p. 77.

as other serfs were subjected to corporal punishment. Flogging was performed by the police (for instance, in 1848 the Moscow police flogged 1,686 workers sent over for punishment by factory owners).[1] Moreover, seasonal workers were under constant vigilant surveillance of the landlords' headmen, the factory management, police officers. The infringement of the immediate economic interests of hired labourers was supplemented with refined humiliation of their human dignity.

In Russia factory legislation began in the thirties and forties of the 19th century. Under the law of 1835 (the first factory law which regulated the work of hired labourers) the factory owner was enjoined to make a labour contract in written form. However, he was entitled to dismiss a worker "for misconduct" at any time at two weeks' notice, whereas the worker was not allowed to quit his job without his employer's consent before the expiry of the term of the labour contract. Although in this article the law of 1835 bore a certain outward resemblance to similar provisions of early factory legislation in Western Europe, on the whole it differed from them in principle, because it was pervaded with a spirit of serfdom: it envisaged automatic dissolution of a labour contract upon expiry of the term of the "leave of absence" for peasants on quitrent; prolongation of a contract was allowed only with the consent of the landlord who had owned the serf, etc.[2]

The above-described situation changed but little even after the reform of 1861, which preserved many feudal survivals. The complex system of allotment of land and payments for land plots (in the form of quitrent and redemption) firmly tied yesterday's serf workmen, who had become free only legally, to their former owners. Even on the formal legal plane, however, the workers did not acquire full rights: a system of mutual guarantees and a special passport regime for "the emancipated" substantially abridged the rights of workers from among the peasants, hampering their free travel through the country, etc.

Small wonder, therefore, that after the abolition of serfdom the workers still suffered not only and not so much from the development of capitalism as primarily from its immaturity: the remnants of serfdom had an extremely adverse effect on the life of the working people. Still surviving, from the system of serfdom, for instance, was the practice of temporary employment of workers (from autumn to spring and from spring to autumn) which enabled entrepreneurs to cut down wages in the autumn-winter period. Just as formerly, workers were recruited by recruiting agents in the

[1] See V. K. Yatsunsky, M. K. Rozhkova, op. cit., p. 240.
[2] For greater detail see: N. S. Kinyapina, op. cit., pp. 399-400.

villages. They chose for this purpose the season of the worst food shortage in the villages—the springtime when, as one of them admitted cynically, "the peasant is as thin as a lath after winter hunger. He himself gets into your hands, just take him for Christ's sake; he will agree to work for a mess of pottage".[1] Thus the system of recruitment supplied capitalist factories with cheap labour—poor peasants.

Many features of the condition of factory hands in an enterprise evidenced their inequality: the worker was actually tied to the entrepreneur by an oral labour contract; the employer was free not only to dismiss the worker whenever he liked but he could also reduce the wage rates at his discretion.[2] Some new acts of factory legislation promulgated in the sixties of the 19th century practically had no serious importance. The measures they provided for were extremely limited and no effective control over their enforcement was introduced. Moreover, legislation protected mainly and in the first place the interests of the entrepreneurs rather than the workers (the institution of penalties for the property entrusted to him, for absence without permission, for "negligence", etc.). Even those few measures which were prescribed seemingly in the interest of the workers were implemented largely at their own expense. For example, in accordance with the "Statute on the Mining District Population" (March 1861), miners' associations were set up at government-owned enterprises for the purpose of "the care of the workers in the event of disease, old age and accidents at home".[3] The funds of the associations were formed of deductions of two to three per cent of the earnings and deductions from the fines imposed on workers (part of the sum was contributed by the factory management).[4]

The specific conditions in which Russia's proletarians lived and worked both before and after the reform of 1861, when the semi-feudal order still barred the way to capitalism and weighed heavily on the workers, generated not only "social" but also a physical poverty.[5] Combination (in a varying "proportion") of capitalist exploitation with elements of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation which made the conditions of life and work for definite categories of the emerging working class intolerable was a distinctive feature of its

[1] Quoted from: *A History of the Working Class in Russia 1861-1900*, Moscow, 1972, p. 62 (in Russian).

[2] See Ibid., pp. 61-63.

[3] *Collection of Russia's Factory Laws*, Part I, Moscow, 1885, p. 342 (in Russian).

[4] See Ibid., p. 344.

[5] See V. I. Lenin, "Review. Karl Kautsky. *Bernstein und das sozialdemokratische Programm. Eine Antikritik*". "A Draft Programme of Our Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1960, pp. 201, 234.

condition in all countries of Eastern Europe, as well as in those regions of Western Europe where capitalism in agriculture developed in a way similar to the East European type (for instance, in Southern and Central Sweden).

The workers of the colonial, semi-colonial and economically dependent countries of Asia and Latin America experienced especially great hardships. The methods of oppression common to capitalism combined here in the most inhuman manner with various forms of exploitation which had prevailed at one time in precapitalist class societies. Such symbiosis meant for the first contingents of workers an exceptionally severe economic plight and an extremely limited legal status. In these countries hired labour often coexisted with compulsory labour (in its various forms, including slavery) and, moreover, combined in practice with elements of non-economic coercion. In China, for instance, a centralised system of compulsory recruitment for government-owned enterprises was employed, including at times even the branding of workers sent to munitions factories or mines. The widespread traditional contract system of hiring and exploiting workers through contractors, which dated genetically from the Middle Ages, was a veritable scourge for Chinese workers. Workers signed on under a contract for enterprises set up by foreign capitalists were directly dependent on contractors. The latter personally paid wages to hired hands and appropriated a large share of their earnings. Contractors acted as usurers lending money at high-interest rates to their "own" workers, to whom they had deliberately delayed payments to force them to apply for a loan. A medieval enslaving system of apprenticeship was applied at factories and plants, similarly to what was the case in the crafts: children and teenagers who got a job at a large factory through the very same contractors were paid no wages for a number of years and worked for board and lodging.

The tyranny of contractors had no limits: a lash and a whip, stocks and irons were conventional tools for "handling" the workers. They were treated especially cruelly at foreign enterprises. Foreign employers, relying on consular jurisdiction and their rights of extraterritoriality relieved themselves of any responsibility for the health and lives of the workers. "Yellow" workers were not considered human in general. Manhandling often resulting in mutilation was a matter of routine. No labour legislation, even the most elementary one, like that which was being introduced in Europe, if only gradually, existed in China. Cruelty and the vigilant supervision of workmen by overseers were the "normal" means of stepping up labour intensity to a maximum.

A predatory attitude to labour was characteristic of both foreign and Chinese entrepreneurs. Its ruthless exploitation was made pos-

sible by the existence of a mass of jobless people, the full absence of factory legislation and the existence of Draconian laws against the workers.[1]

Hired labourers, primarily those bound by a contract, in India and Latin America worked and lived largely under similar conditions. In the latter, in particular, no essential changes took place in the real situation of many categories of workers even after the abolition of slavery. The workers of large enterprises often lived in barracks and were forbidden to leave the factory territory. In certain cases mining and other enterprises had their own police, and their own system of legal proceedings which afforded full scope for abuses and outrages against the workers.

It can be seen from the aforesaid that there were definite, sometimes essential differences and distinctions in the methods and intensity of exploitation, the economic, social and legal status of proletarians in different countries and continents. Nevertheless, in its formative period the working class was a suffering class everywhere. However, its position and role in society were characterised also by another, much more significant feature in the historical perspective—the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLE

The difficult economic and humiliating social condition of the proletariat was the objective cause which pushed the young working class to the path of resistance to its capitalist exploiters, the basis for the emergence of the labour movement. The content and aims, just as the methods and the very possibilities of its struggle against the bourgeoisie were varied, changing in the process of the awakening and maturation of its class self-awareness, and largely depended on the composition of the participants in the struggle, which varied with its different stages. For all that, whatever the character of the resistance offered by the emerging working class to capitalist oppression, however different the methods of pressure brought to bear by individual groups and contingents of proletarians and semi-proletarians on their class enemies, this struggle one way or another expressed the growing class hatred of the exploited for the bourgeoisie, while the different means they used in their struggle represented forms of proletarian resentment. The workers had of necessity to draw their "consciousness of manhood only by cherishing the most glowing hatred, the most unbroken inward rebellion against the bourgeoisie in power."[2]

[1] For greater detail see: T. N. Akatova, "The Distinctions of the Formation of the Working Class in China", op. cit., pp. 110-15.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 411.

The emerging working class took its first steps in social activity on the path of *economic struggle* against the bourgeoisie. Irrespective of the scope and forms of its resistance to capitalist exploitation, at first it was invariably of a predominantly if not exclusively economic character everywhere. The economic struggle was a logically necessary stage in the development of the working-class movement connected with the formation of the proletariat as an independent social class, with the birth of its class consciousness, the growth of its confidence in its strength. Through economic struggle the workers sought, as Engels said, "to escape from this brutalising condition", to achieve "a better, more human position".[1] If the workers waged no economic struggle "they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation".[2] Indeed, "even under slavery or serfdom there was never any oppression of the working people as terrible as that under capitalism when the workers cannot put up a resistance...", Lenin said.[3]

The socio-psychological factor which compelled the workers to engage in collective economic struggle against the bourgeoisie was the class *instinct* characteristic of the proletariat since the time of its origination. The industrial workers did not have to "invent" the methods of this struggle out of thin air. They were developed gradually and were largely inherited from the preceding historical period. Such continuity was quite natural: it was determined by the very social composition of this social class which embraced wide strata of manufactory and artisan workmen, who had resorted to such means of resistance to a varying degree even under manufactory capitalism. Therefore, in its early period the labour movement included a variety of intricately interwoven *traditional* forms of social protest on the part of the above-mentioned categories of workers of the pre-industrial epoch and also the methods characteristic mainly of the industrial proletariat. Adopting different methods of struggle used by its predecessors, i.e., the groups of proletarians historically formed earlier, the industrial proletariat further developed and enriched them with its own experience, working out its own methods and tactics of struggle.

In the period under review conflicts arising from the new social order were still in the stage of origination. The proletariat itself had just begun to emerge from the general mass of the petty-bourgeois strata as a new class in embryo and was not yet capable of independent political action. Extremely disunited even within its own midst (the factory workers were still a minority) it was closely

[1] Ibid., p. 501.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, p. 75.

[3] V. I. Lenin, "On Strikes", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 312.

linked at the same time with a motley crowd of city and village plebeians, with the havenots in the broad sense of the word. These plebeian lower strata of a mixed composition in the cities, on the one hand, and the agricultural labourers and peasants who had migrated to the cities, on the other, were in turn the very same social groups whose involvement in the early proletarian movement lent a characteristic *rebellious* colour to labour protest actions. However, they combined spontaneity and the spirit of rebellion with rudimentary elements of organisation, which became more and more firmly implanted in the mass of the workers as time went on.

One of the most striking manifestations of the rebellious character of the first isolated outbreaks of labour resentment, their integration into the general plebeian movements were disturbances caused by high prices and the lagging of wages far behind the price increase. The violent outbursts of spontaneous indignation in such cases usually took the ancient form of hunger riots in which the plebeian ruck joined the workers just as in earlier times. During such riots starving mobs seized grain stores, carts and barges with flour, raided potato stalls on the markets, destroyed and set fire to flour mills. In England, for instance, the most varied categories and strata of proletarians took part in food riots in the nineties of the 18th century: miners, workers of cotton factories and hand-loom weavers of Lancashire, port workers of the Eastern coast, cottage industry workers (knitters, etc.), agricultural labourers, craftsmen, and workmen of Sheffield's hardware crafts, skilled engineering workers of Birmingham, etc. Not infrequently, workers' wives were quite active in such movements. Wreaking their fury directly on bread speculators, potato and butter shop owners, etc., the workers vented it at the same time on the owners of large manufactories and factory owners. They raided their homes, expressing thereby their indignation at the poverty and social inequity brought on by the advent of capitalism.

Similar facts are to be found in the early history of the labour movement in other countries. For example, in France violent food riots involving wide plebeian and worker masses broke out not only in the late 18th century, particularly during the bourgeois revolution, but also much later—in the thirties and forties of the 19th century. In 1838 in La Rochelle loaders and workers of other trades supported by poor peasants from the neighbouring villages smashed up carts with grain owned by local profiteers, attempted to set fire to the house of one of them and sacked the homes of other grain dealers in protest against high bread prices. The poor rioted against a high cost of living in Saumur and in the Sarthe department; the workers of Le Maine, who had built a barricade in front of a bridge which was to be crossed by carts with grain, were joined by

their peasant allies from the neighbouring villages. Then food riots which were often accompanied by bitter clashes with police and troops spread to the central districts of the country.[1]

Wherever they might happen and however violent, protest actions of this kind were invariably isolated and local. Although they were mainly of an economic character, however, they often assumed a political colour. For example, in England where a broad democratic movement for an election reform arose in the late 18th and early 19th centuries hunger riots revolutionised the masses, rallied them to a struggle against the ruling oligarchy, for democratic reforms.[2] Political tones were clearly audible in French workers' disturbances during the July monarchy. They were generated not only by high bread, potato and other food prices but also by the plight caused by the economic crisis of 1847. Unrest often went far out of its original limits and turned into strikes (Mulouse, 1847) coloured in strikingly clear political tones; in Nantes, Lille and other French cities starving workers and paupers at rallies and demonstrations shouted "Bread! Work!", sang Marseillaise and exclaimed "Down with Louis Philippe! Vive la République!" These disturbances just as the hunger riots of 1845-1847 in Germany (Berlin, Cologne, Mainz and other cities)[3] heralded the impending revolution.

An important trend in the history of the early class battles of the proletariat, in England in the first place, was the *movement of the machine-breakers.*[4] It became prevalent mainly in the textile industry branches where small crafts and artisan workmanship were most firmly established: clothes, cotton and knitted goods production. In England this movement at the time of its climax (1811-1817) was limited territorially mainly to three districts: West Riding (the croppers or shearmen), South Lancashire (the hand-loom weavers) and Nottinghamshire, taking in parts of Leicestershire and Derbyshire (the framework knitters). These categories of workmen of the cottage industries and crafts suffered most of all from the introduction of machines. Handicraft products could not compete against products of mechanised factories. As factory industry grew an ever larger number of craftsmen and cottage industry workers

---

[1] For greater detail see: F. V. Potemkin, *The Industrial Revolution in France*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1971, pp. 203-12 (in Russian).

[2] See E. B. Chernyak, *The Mass Movement in England and Ireland...*, pp. 72-109, 119-30, 661-67, and others; by the same author, *The Democratic Movement in England 1816-1820*, Moscow, 1957, p. 74, and others (both in Russian).

[3] Leon Uhen, *Gruppenberwusstsein und informelle Gruppenbildungen bei deutschen Arbeitern im Jahrhundert der Industrialisierung*, Band I, Duncker & Humbolt, Berlin, 1964, S. 157-58.

[4] Malcolm I. Thomis, *The Luddites. Machine-Breaking in Regency England*, Newton Abbot-Hamden, 1970; E. P. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 521-602.

became destitute. Curtailment of earnings, unemployment, which soared catastrophically in years of an unfavourable economic situation consequent on the narrowing of foreign markets caused by the continental blockade, the increase in orders for armaments alone, and so on meant abject poverty both for workers and for their families. All this tended to channel the spontaneous social protest of the craftsmen, semi-proletarians and proletarians living in poverty towards a struggle against machines and factories.

The protest actions of the machine-breakers who destroyed and burned down factory buildings, warehouses, raw materials and manufactured goods have been conventionally named the Luddite movement in the historical literature after the name of the legendary "King" (or "general") of the workers Ned Ludd, a Leicestershire journeyman who had reputedly been the first to break up stocking frames (his name was first mentioned in sources dating 1790). The Luddite movement had started as far back as the sixties of the 18th century and lasted in the main until 1830. It developed irregularly with varying intensity and spasmodically, as it were, falling mostly on years of economic depression and embracing alternately or concurrently different industries and districts, depending on the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the condition of a given category of working people. The immediate causes of Luddite actions were wage reductions, growing unemployment and high prices. A certain contributing role was played by periodic setbacks for artisan workmen in their attempts to achieve through parliament government regulation of wages and apprenticeship in accordance with ancient laws which had practically become invalid: the entrepreneurs preferred to employ untrained workers who competed against skilled workers with a record of apprenticeship in a mechanical trade. The ban on trade unions enacted in the late 18th century in its turn induced the English workmen to resort to violent actions.

The most violent outbreaks of the Luddite movement took place in 1779 (the raids on cotton factories in Lancashire), in 1802 (actions against cropping machines in Wiltshire), in 1811-1812 (the destruction by stocking-knitters of about 1,000 stocking frames in Nottinghamshire; the riots of Yorkshire shearmen who had armed themselves with heavy hammers called "the Great Enoch" after the engineering workman Enoch Taylor and smashed cropping machines in the finishing departments of clothing factories; the destruction of weaving mills in Lancashire and Cheshire); in 1816-1817 (the struggle mainly of agricultural labourers against threshing-machines); in 1826 (the destruction by cotton-weavers of factories and power-looms in Lancashire), and in 1830 (Wiltshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire—the movement of weavers, paper-makers, machine-builders, as well as agricultural labourers in different parts of the country).

Many of these riots were extremely violent. Troops were moved in to subdue the Luddites who had caused great damage to the factory owners. The scope of the efforts to suppress the Luddite movement is eloquently evidenced by the following two factors: the strength of the troops called upon to put down the workers' riots in 1811-1812 (12,000 officers and men) was greater than that of Wellington's army which had landed in Portugal in 1808. On February 8, 1812, Parliament adopted a bill instituting a death penalty for the breaking of machines (it was opposed by George Byron in his famous speech in the House of Lords). After 1830 the Luddite movement which had used up its resources and was undermined by reprisals ceased to exist.

At different times actions similar to those of the Luddites took place with varying degree of violence in many other countries at certain stages of industrial development, mainly in the textile industry.

In France Luddism first became manifest in the period 1817-1823.[1] In 1819 labour unrest flared up in Vienne (the department of Isère) when news got about that two entrepreneurs, Gentin and Odoard, intended to install a shearing machine in their manufactories. Master shearmen applied to the city Mayor with a petition, declaring that the machine "offers the *pernicious means* of shearing, glossing, and brushing 1,000 ells of cloth in 12 hours, while being handled by only four men. Consequently, it is going to deprive a very great number of shearmen of work." Despite protests the machine in disassembled form was sent from Lyons under gendarme escort. The workers seized with alarm attacked the escort and attempted to smash the machine. Troops were called in to disperse them. A few workers were detained, but a jury in Grenoble acquitted them.[2] Riots connected with attempts to break machines occurred in 1819-1823 also in Clermont l'Hérault, Lodeve, Castres, Carcassone, and later the introduction of machines was opposed by Paris printers (1830-1840), Le Havre's parquet makers (1830) and especially by Lodeve textile workers (1845) who went on strike in protest against the application of machines.[3] On the whole, however, Luddism in France failed to spread so widely as in England.

This is also true of Belgium (textile workers smashed up machines in Brussels, Liège, Verviers, Eipen in 1821-1830), in Germany (Aachen,

[1] For greater detail see: Frank E. Manuel, "The Luddite Movement in France".—In: *The Journal of Modern History*, June 1938, Vol. X, No. 2, pp. 180-211.

[2] Jean Bruhat, op. cit., pp. 202-03.

[3] F. E. Manuel, "L'introduction des machines en France et les ouvriers: la grève des tisserands de Lodeve en 1845".— In: *Revue d'Histoire Moderne*, Nouvelle Serie, N. 18, Juin-Août, 1935, pp. 209-25; N. 19, Septembre-Octobre 1935, pp. 352-72.

Düsseldorf in 1830-1834, Seifhennersdorf in 1842)[1], in the Kingdom of Poland (weavers' riots in Lodz in 1834, 1838, 1861),[2] in Switzerland (a factory was burned down in Ulster in 1832)[3] and in the United States where cases of destruction of machines were quite rare in general, because spinners and weavers working at home were few and there was a permanent labour shortage.

In their assessment of Luddism some later bourgeois and reformist historians depicted the riots of machine-breakers as acts of blind despair of starving workers[4] and the Luddites themselves as enemies of technical progress.[5] In fact, being a spontaneous revolt against machines and factories, the Luddite movement also pursued practical objectives: it was a protest against beggarly wages and intolerable working conditions in general. The craftsmen and workmen sought to compel the entrepreneurs and the authorities to meet their demand for higher wages, for fixed wage rates, for increasing employment, for legislation to stop the uncontrolled hire of unskilled labour by the entrepreneurs, etc. In other words, the Luddites put direct pressure on the capitalists and the state safeguarding the latter's interests to force them to lessen the intensity of the exploitation of certain groups of workers and raise their standards of living. They did not yet see other ways of achieving these goals.

Significantly, the draft bill against cropping machines adopted at a meeting of Yorkshire shearmen and weavers in 1805 and signed by 39,000 persons[6] said that they realised the usefulness of spinning jennies but would not allow anybody else to use them to the detriment of their interests.[7] In this way the workers put up a resistance not to technical progress as such but to factory machines as long as capital used them against labour.They broke up machines

---

[1] Leo Uhen, op. cit., S. 147-49; Dieter Dowe, *Aktion und Organisation. Arbeiterbewegung, sozialistische und kommunistische Bewegung in der preussischen Rheinprovinz 1820-1852*, Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, Hannover, 1970, S. 26, 30.

[2] Natalia Gasiorowska, "Les problèmes de la formation de la classe ouvrière en Pologne".—In: *La Pologne au X^e Congrès International des Sciences Historiques à Rome*, Warszawa, 1955, pp. 321-22.

[3] Eugen Marti, *Die moderne Arbeitswelt. Von der sozialen Folgen der industriellen Revolution*, Zwingli Verlag, Zürich, 1956, S. 8; Erich Gruner, *Die Arbeiter in der Schweiz im 19. Jahrhundert. Soziale Lage, Organisation, Verhältnis zu Arbeitgeber und Staat*, Francke Verlag, Bern, 1968, S. 505.

[4] A similar point of view may be encountered in modern historiography: see Leo Uhen, op. cit., S. 148; Jean Bron, *Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français*, t. I, *Le droit à l'existence. De début de XIX siècle à 1885*, Paris, 1968, p. 54.

[5] For criticism of such views see in greater detail: E. J. Hobsbawm, "The Machine-Breakers".—In: E. J. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men*, op. cit., pp. 13-15.

[6] J. L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, *The Skilled Labourer 1760-1832*, Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1930, pp. 183-84.

[7] Quoted from V. A. Vasyutinsky, *The Machine-Breakers*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1929, p. 66 (in Russian).

installed in capitalist factories, i.e., those which cut the ground from under the feet of craftsmen and cottage industry workers. Machines whose introduction did not destroy the cottage industry and caused no threat either to their wages or their employment were not opposed by the workers. Hand-loom weavers and spinners feared the machine as a formidable competitor, and were even more scared of the prospect of factory work.

The origins of Luddism just as of hunger riots with which they definitely have points of contact go back in time to the massive spontaneous riots of the preceding, early proletarian period of the labour movement. When Luddism was at its height there were quite a few cases of damage and destruction of other, most diverse kinds of capitalist property in addition to machines especially when the breaking of machines combined with food riots (as in England in 1811-1812). That was a traditional method of resolving labour conflicts dictated by the class instinct and sanctified by the history of the social battles of the manufactory period.

At the same time, Luddism marked a new development phase in the activity of the socially heterogeneous working class still in its formative stage. That was in essence a labour movement, although it was immature in respect of its class awareness and reproduced the methods of struggle used by the artisan-manufactory proletariat. In the opinion of craftsmen, factory workers from their midst, and cottage industry workers, machines and factories embodied the forces of oppression, whose truly capitalist nature the workmen were not yet capable of identifying. It was not accidental, as E. Thompson pointed out, that the factories were hated not only by spinners and weavers, but also by miners, shoe-makers, tailors, joiners, butchers, i.e., working people not yet directly endangered by the machines. Nevertheless, all these categories of workmen sided with the spinners and weavers.[1] Burning down factories and smashing machines, the workers thereby expressed their resentment at the horrors of capitalist exploitation brought on by the Industrial Revolution, at the actual and potential consequences of the advent of the factory system. They wanted "to display their wrath to the factory owners", they tried out "their joint strength in order to get out of an unbearable situation, without yet understanding why their position is so hopeless and what they should strive for".[2] In other words, the raids on factories were just a distorted form of labour struggle against the capitalists. As Marx said, "it took both time and experience before the workpeople learnt to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and to direct their attacks, not against

[1] E. P. Thompson, op. cit., p. 587.
[2] V. I. Lenin, "On Strikes", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 312-13.

the material instruments of production, but against the mode in which they are used".[1]

Although it was marked by a salient element of spontaneity, the Luddite movement contained at the same time the rudiments of organisation: in England there were secret Luddite societies which worked out plans of joint actions, maintained a correspondence, sent their representatives as far as Ireland, called meetings and presented petitions to parliament. The parties which raided the factories were disciplined. Some Luddite actions, primarily in Lancashire and Yorkshire in 1812, were distinguished by a fairly clearly expressed political, anti-government orientation. One of the croppers' appeals called on the workers "to come forward with arms ... and shake off the hateful Yoke of a Silly Old Man George III, and his Son more silly and their Rogueish Ministers, all Nobles and Tyrants...", another called for the establishment of a Republic.[2] The Luddites were supported by the mass of the workers and craftsmen of several trades. In other words, at some stages of its development the Luddite movement extended far beyond the limits of a purely economic struggle as bourgeois authors often depict it today.[3] In England at any rate it indisputably tended to turn into a massive democratic revolutionary insurrection movement—an inalienable part of the struggle for a parliamentary reform which was mounting throughout the country.

On the whole, however, the Luddite movement had a dual content. On the one hand, the Luddites' ardent desire to revive the ancient laws to regulate production (limiting the number of apprentices, etc.) tended to draw them backwards to the preindustrial era. Objectively the smashing of machines and the raids on factories retarded to a certain extent the growth of productive forces in the consolidating capitalist society. Finally, by opposing capitalist exploitation skilled workmen and craftsmen sought in fact to get rid of it and preserve themselves as economically independent producers. Consequently, that was that phase in the development of the labour movement which Marx and Engels so exhaustively described in the *Communist Manifesto*: "They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labour, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages."[4] In this sense Luddism, if compared with

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 404.

[2] A. L. Morton and George Tate, *The British Labour Movement, 1770-1920*, London, Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1956, p. 37.

[3] François Crouzet, *L'économie britannique*, op. cit., p. 799.

[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 492.

the earlier social movements of the oppressed, for instance, the serfs of the feudal epoch, could best be defined as a "peasant revolt" of industrial workers, although this time they attacked not feudal castles as had been done by peasants in the Middle Ages but cropping machines, power-looms, and the factories themselves as symbols of oppression.

On the other hand, the Luddite "direct action" to protect the *economic interests of labour* helped them to resist the growing encroachments of capital, for which the machine served as a tool for stepping up exploitation, a means of keeping the worker in check and preventing his protest. Indeed, the machine was "also a power inimical to him, and as such capital proclaims it from the roof tops and as such makes use of it. It is the most powerful weapon for repressing strikes, those periodical revolts of the working-class against the autocracy of capital."[1] Fighting against machines the workers defended their "right to life" and sometimes they succeeded in achieving, if only for a time, the limited economic goals they pursued (a wage raise, etc.). In this sense Luddism was a historically progressive phenomenon. Significantly, many of the Luddites' demands had anticipated the slogans of the labour movement of a later period when it reached greater maturity: the institution of a guaranteed minimum wage, restrictions on the exploitation of women and children, full employment. In all these respects the aspirations of the Luddites were also directed towards the future—the factory legislation of the coming century.

Finally, the afore-mentioned political tendencies of English Luddism were also essential as a component of the mass democratic movement; in particular, it was the Luddite organisations that raised experienced leaders with organising abilities for the local democratic unions.

Luddism played an important part in the history of the early labour movement. It was with full reason that Engels regarded the actions of the Luddites as the first truly class actions of the workers. "As a class, they first manifested opposition to the bourgeoisie when they resisted the introduction of machinery at the very beginning of the industrial period."[2] British communist historians pointed out that "...the earlier phenomenon of 'Luddism' in all its forms had helped to provide the pattern of solidarity and mass action".[3]

However, as a method of proletarian resistance Luddism proved to be short-lived: on the whole the protest of the machine-breakers was of an isolated character, was confined to individual localities and, most important of all, was directed against "one feature only of

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 410.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 503.
[3] *Luddism in the Period 1779-1830*, London, 1956, p. 24.

our present social arrangements. When the momentary end was attained, the whole weight of social power fell upon the unprotected evil-doers and punished them to its heart's content, while the machinery was introduced none the less."[1] Other methods were required to resist the onslaught of the bourgeoisie, and they were found. The greatest importance among them, already in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, attached to *economic strikes*, which have remained to this day a major means of defending the immediate interests of the working class under the domination of capitalism and also of preparing for a struggle against the exploitive system as a whole.

England was the first scene of the development of the strike movement. The first to use strikes as a method of economic struggle, and fairly often for that matter, were workers of the textile branches,[2] cottage industry workers, workmen of small artisan workshops, and at a later time factory workers. In the sixties of the 18th century the miners joined in the strike struggle. During some strikes they burned stocks of coal or destroyed pithead machinery.[3] Violent disturbances of miners took place in the early nineties (in Bristol, Wigan and other localities). In the late 18th and the early 19th century English seamen and port workers constituted a sizeable contingent of strikers.

The biggest strikes usually occurred in periods of a particularly sharp decline in the conditions of life of the masses. Such were, for example, the hand-loom weavers' strikes in Scotland in 1804-1805 and Lancashire in 1808 (the latter lasted for over a month, so the entrepreneurs had to raise wages by 20 per cent, partly meeting the strikers' demand for a 33 per cent increase); the Lancashire strike of 1810 (spinners accounted for one-third of the strikers); the massive strike of Scottish hand-loom weavers in 1812, when, as evidenced by a contemporary hostile to the strikers, 40,000 workmen acted with great unanimity and determination, while "the leading men of their body" were persons of "wonderful coolness".[4] Conspicuous among many other strikes were those of Lancashire proletarians in the summer and autumn of 1818, involving, in particular, power-loom weavers. The first strike of *factory weavers* recorded in history took place here in Stockport. Factory spinners (manning spinning jennies) and workmen of related trades also took part in the strikes; the textile workers were joined by miners, who stopped sup-

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 503.

[2] One of the earliest strikes of cotton-weavers near Manchester took place in 1758 (H. A. Turner, *Trade Union Growth. Structure and Policy. A Comparative Study of the Cotton Unions*, London, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1962, p. 80.

[3] A. L. Morton and George Tate, *The British Labour Movement*, op. cit., p. 18.

[4] A. Aspinall, *The Early English Trade Unions*. Documents from the Home Office Papers in the Public Record Office, London, The Batchworth Press, 1949, p. 146.

plying coal to factories, by the hand-loom weavers of many other cities and towns, by dyers, hat-makers, joiners, etc.[1] Government reprisals and the depletion of the means available to the strikers, as well as the absence of unity in their ranks finally put an end to this movement.

In the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century the strike movement arose in other European countries where the Industrial Revolution was in progress, as well as in the United States. In the period of Napoleon's Empire and later in the years of the Restoration the strike movement assumed wide scope in *France*. In 1806 there was a massive strike of Paris building workers in protest against their working conditions; in 1817 a strike of Lyons hat-makers, who protested against a reduction in wage rates; in 1824 a massive strike, quite characteristic of France in that period, at a cotton mill in Ulm. The 800 workers involved demanded the restoration of the dinner break which had been cut by the employers by half an hour, and a wage rise. The strike was suppressed by armed force, and one of the workers' leaders, Roustel, was executed by a court verdict. Twenty-eight strikers were sentenced to hard labour and imprisonment.[2] A series of strikes of artisan, manufactory and partly of factory workers took place in 1825-1827 when tinmen and zinc-coaters went on strike in Paris, bakers in Marseilles, glazers and miners in Commentry, stone-masons in Toulon, spinners in Ulm and Saint Cantin, etc. The character of the workers' demands was exemplified by the strike of Rouen spinners in August 1830: they demanded a 12-hour working day, the abolition of the regulation on fines for belated reporting for work (these fines were equal to double the wage for the time of absence) and of deductions for uncompleted work.[3]

In the period of the July monarchy—the domination of the bankers and the "captains" of industry—strikes followed one another in rapid succession. Proletarians of a variety of trades and industries in the capital and in provincial towns, workmen of manufactories, journeymen and factory and plant workers went on strike. According to the Swiss historian J.-P. Aguet, 382 strikes took place in France between 1830 and 1847. They involved workers of 71 trades in 121 localities.[4] Especially steep growth of the strike struggles was to be

---

[1] Ibid., pp. 246-302.

[2] See E. V. Tarle, *The Working Class in France at the Time of Machine Production*, p. 112, and others (in Russian).

[3] Edouard Dolléans et Gérard Dehove, *Histoire du travail en France*, op. cit., p. 189.

[4] This figure (382 strikes) indicates the number of strikes authentically recorded in historical sources. Between 1830 and 1847 the courts passed a total of 1,049 verdicts in cases of "coalitions". (See Jean-Pierre Aguet, *Contribution à l'histoire...*, op. cit., p. XXI-XXII, 365).

seen in the forties when the pauperisation of the semi-proletarian and proletarian strata sharply intensified. At the same time, there was a particularly marked increase in the scale of strikes at factories, at partly mechanised manufactories, in the mining industry, and in ports. The biggest of such strikes were those of the coal-miners in Rive-de-Gier in February 1840 and in April-May 1844. The latter strike lasted for about six weeks and was extremely well organised; the miners were supported by the urban and rural population of the district.[1] Some other just as vigorous strike struggles of workers of large-scale capitalist industry were as follows: the strike of Anzin coal-miners in 1837 when they responded to the mine-owners' refusal to raise wages by putting out of operation the boilers of the steam elevators delivering coal to the surface and clogging the pits with stones, coal, and logs; the strike of factory spinners in Lille in 1839; the strike of 550 Rouen foundrymen, including some English workers, in 1842; the strike of the workers of wall-paper factories in the St. Antoine suburb of the capital in 1844, which evoked solidarity from the Paris workers of other trades, and so on. Just as formerly, large contingents of strikers consisted of artisan manufactory workmen typical of France: the manufactory weavers of Nimes (1836), the Paris printers who protested in the same year against the institution of fines for belated reporting for work; 240 carpenters of the town of Lillebonne who demanded a cut in the bread prices in 1840; participants in numerous strikes in Paris in 1840 (tailors, bakers, shoe-makers, stone-masons, building workers, joiners, nailers, fitters of carriage manufactories, harness-makers, etc.).

Large-scale disturbances and strikes of miners were observed in 1830 in *Belgium*.[2]

The strike movement in the *United States* assumed a constant and systematic character at a fairly early time.[3] The strike struggles here were begun in 1786 by a massive strike of the journeymen printers of Philadelphia, who succeeded in having their demands satisfied thanks to their unanimity. In the nineties strikes in the country continued to mount, involving different groups of workers (Philadelphia house carpenters in 1791, Baltimore sailors in 1795, New York carpenters and masons in 1795, etc.). These actions assumed a wider scale in the early decades of the 19th century. In 1823 a general strike of women tailors was held in New York for the first time in the history of the American labour movement. In the mid-

[1] For greater detail see: E. V. Tarle, "The Massive Miners' Strike in Rive-de-Gier in 1844", *Works*, Vol. VI, Moscow, 1959, pp. 291-318 (in Russian); P. Quillaume, "Grèves et organisations ouvrières chez les Mineurs de la Loire au milieu du XIX^{e} siècle".— In: *Le Mouvement Social*, 1963, N. 43, pp. 6-9.

[2] B. S. Chlepner, *Cent ans...*, op. cit., p. 23.

[3] Philip S. Foner, *History...*, op. cit., pp. 69, 101, 105, 108, 116.

twenties stubborn strike struggles began for a 10-hour working day. Taking part in them were the Boston shipbuilders (1825), Philadelphia house carpenters (1827) and many other categories of workers. In 1828 factory workers went on strike for the first time in American history: that was a strike of cotton-mill workers in Paterson, New Jersey, with children taking part alongside of adult men and women workers.

The strike struggles became quite bitter in the thirties and forties. The struggle against the entrepreneurs, in the construction of railways in particular, in 1831-1834 was accompanied by grave excesses; severe reprisals were used against the strikers, including the death penalty for their leaders. Just in four years, from 1833 to 1837, there were 168 strikes, including 103 strikes for higher wages and 26 for a 10-hour working day. They involved building workers, tailors, hatmakers, bakers, sailors, workers of rope factories, printers, workmen of government arsenals, railwaymen, longshoremen, and other workers.

Women workers took an increasingly active part in the strike struggles. In 1834 hundreds of women workers went on strike at Dover and New Hampshire in protest against wage cuts. The strike was lost, but the women workers, refusing to return to the factories, went home ... "opposed to the system of slavery attempted to be established in our manufacturing establishment". In the same year 800 factory women workers struck work in Lowell in protest against a 15 per cent wage cut. They were soon joined by over twelve hundred more women workers who joined in a pledge "not to go back into the mills to work unless our wages are continued to us as they have been". After the defeat of the strike many women returned home, to the farms. In 1836 there was a strike of textile women workers in Omsbory in protest against an increase in the work quota: each woman worker had been enjoined to tend two looms instead of one. The rate of operation had also grown while the wages remained unchanged. The strong determination of the women workers forced the factory owner to agree to concessions.

One of the main slogans of the strike struggles in the thirties was the demand for a 10-hour working day. The workers succeeded in achieving it in many cities of the mid-Atlantic states (for instance, in Philadelphia by a successful general strike in 1835, etc.).

All these and many other facts show incidentally how artificial and fragile are the constructs of those American bourgeois historians who allege that the working class in the United States has followed its own, special path, that the country has experienced no class battles like those in the European countries, that the class struggle in European terms of Socialism has not existed here altogether.[1]

[1] Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1957, p. 332.

In reality, labour conflicts in the United States grew just as anywhere else; the economic strikes, as anywhere, were an important form as well as a stage of the development of the class struggle and the class consciousness of the ascending proletariat.

In the countries where the Industrial Revolution began later (Germany, Italy, Spain, the Scandinavian states, etc.) the strike movement had assumed wide scope towards the middle and in the latter half of the 19th century.

In the first half of the 19th century strikes in *Germany* were relatively rare. Taking part in them were mainly journeymen and manufactory workmen. Between 1820 and 1847 the total number of such protest actions did not exceed a few score and, with rare exceptions, not more than one or two strikes took place during a year.[1]

In *Italy* in the sixties strikes were as yet sporadic and short-lived. Their scale was limited to one enterprise, the strikers' demands were quite modest, and the forms of struggle were often Luddite. It was not until the end of the decade that the strike movement had begun to widen.

The first massive strike which became a milestone event in the history of the labour movement in *Spain* was the strike in May 1855, which involved workers of several trades.

The strike at the Gustavberg porcelain factory near Stockholm in 1850 became a conspicuous event in the history of the labour movement of *Sweden*. The strike was provoked by the introduction of harsh discipline, by a threat of wage cuts. It had the character of a riot and is remembered by the working people as the "Gustavsberg revolt".[2] Later new strikes took place in different regions of the country: of the Falun miners in 1855, the Kristinehamn stone-masons, and the Malmö carpenters in 1855, the shipbuilders of the Stockholm shipyard in 1856, the seamen and stevedores in the port of Stockholm in 1859, the Falun miners again in 1857, the journeymen tailors in Erebru in 1859, etc.[3]

In the initial period of the Industrial Revolution the strike movement developed in *Russia* as well. It involved different categories of workers (both hired and serf labourers). Disturbances following a refusal to work expressed in many instances the specific position of the emerging proletariat of Russia; they were often a protest not only and not so much against capitalist as primarily against feudal

[1] Elisabeth Todt, Hans Radandt, *Zur Frühgeschichte der deutschen Gewerkschaftsbewegung 1800-1849, Die freie Gewerkschaft*, Verlagsgesellschaft MBH, Berlin, 1950, S. 78-79.

[2] For greater detail see: R. Karlbom, *Hungerupplopp och strejker 1793-1867. En studie i den svenska arbeterrörelsens uppkomst*, Lund, 1967, S. 126-28.

[3] Knut Bäckström, *Arbetarrörelsen i Sverige*, Stockholm, 1958, S. 79, 89.

exploitation: indeed, it was precisely the combination of the bondage of serfdom with the oppression of the entrepreneurs that doomed the mass of the workers to hopeless penury and an extremely humiliating social status.

The workers' resentment at both these facts, therefore, often took forms characteristic of the preceding stage of the labour movement—the manufactory epoch. Frequent escapes of serf workmen as well as workers of government-owned enterprises from their places of work in the period under review were the most common form of protest. For instance, in 1838 the gold mines in Vologda province were left by 300 of the 700 state peasant serfs who had worked here under a labour contract;[1] the intolerable conditions of work and life forced about one thousand workers to flee within a few weeks from the construction sites of the Volga-Don railway line on the eve of the 1861 reform.[2] Not infrequently workers driven to despair by their economic plight and "offences" on the part of entrepreneurs, managers, contractors submitted collective complaints against their oppressors to the local authorities; over fifty of such complaints submitted in the thirties and forties are on record.[3] Escapes from enterprises and complaints were traditional passive forms of resistance habitual for serfs fleeing from their lords or seeking justice from higher authority.

At the same time, workers stripped of everything by their masters and oppressed by the barbaric methods of non-economic coercion did not see a gleam of hope in their existence and more and more often spontaneously united for a joint resistance to their oppressors. Its most important form was collective cessation of work, i.e., strikes. The scale of the strike movement was relatively small, strikes occurring only as isolated, limited actions at individual enterprises. Between 1830 and 1850 there were about twenty cases of collective refusal to work after the pattern of a strike.[4]

Labour conflicts most commonly occurred in the construction of roads, canals, dams, where workers (both hired and serf labourers) lived and worked virtually like hard labour convicts. Small wonder, therefore, that, as evidenced by historical documents, within five months of 1844 alone the workers building the St. Petersburg-Moscow railway struck work four times, demanding an improvement in their working conditions.[5] Significantly, quite conspicuous among

---

[1] See *History of the USSR from Antiquity to Date*, Vol. IV, Moscow, 1967, p. 303 (in Russian).

[2] See V. K. Yatsunsky, M. K. Rozhkova, *The Workers in Pre-Reform Russia*, p. 236 (in Russian).

[3] See *History of the USSR from Antiquity to Date*, Vol. IV, p. 301.

[4] Ibid.

[5] See *The Labour Movement in 19th-Century Russia*, Collected documents and records, Vol. 1, Part 2, Moscow, 1951, pp. 653-56 (in Russian).

the demands expressing the specifically labour interests (higher pay, abolition of fines and deductions, better food, etc.) were such as those for ending the outrages against and the cruel treatment of workers, compliance with the terms of labour contracts—demands typical of the early stage of the class struggle waged by the emerging proletariat.

At times a collective refusal to work grew into violent riots—armed revolts of the workers. The central focus of the most violent outbreaks of struggle was the mining and metallurgical industries of the Urals, where labour disturbances were the most frequent, longest and violent. One of the largest disturbances of the Ural workmen in the latter half of the 19th century was the revolt of the charcoal burners at the Revda metallurgical works of the Demidovs in April 1841. Its immediate cause was an increase in the output quota (increase in the capacity of the charcoal burning trough). The charcoal burners stopped work and demanded not only a return to the former quota but also a wage raise, as well as the cancellation of their debts in the management books. They also demanded an end to outrages against the workers. The charcoal burners were soon joined by a few hundred workers of other trades (finery operatives, carpenters, stonemasons, etc.), so that the number of strikers grew to 800. The workers displayed great persistence, unity and determination (the elements of organisation characteristic of that strike were noted by all researchers). Armed with pickets and rifles, the workers fearlessly gave battle to an army unit moved in to suppress the "riot". The unit commander ordered artillery to be used against the workers: 33 of them, including Miron Shchukin, one of their bravest leaders, were killed on the spot with case-shot. The massacre at Revda was followed by judicial reprisals; by a verdict signed by tzar Nicholas I himself, the leaders of the "rioters" were condemned to hard labour for life: 300 workmen selected by drawing lots were flogged.[1]

Other large foci of labour unrest in Russia in the early stage of the Industrial Revolution was the Moscow and St. Petersburg industrial areas. There, just as in the Urals, labour protest against the oppression of the entrepreneurs combined resentment against serfdom and its evils. Disturbances among hired labourers, however, contributed a great deal to labour unrest in these areas, because the hired labour of peasants on quitrent prevailed over the compulsory labour of serfs here.

There were also certain differences between the demands of the Ural workers, on the one hand, and the workers of the Moscow and

[1] For greater detail see: M. A. Gorlovsky, A. N. Pyatnistky, *A Look at the History of the Labour Movement in the Urals. Essays on the Position of the Serf Workers in the Middle Urals and Their Struggle for the Abolition of Serfdom (1800-1870)*, Sverdlovsk, 1954, p. 244, and others (in Russian).

St. Petersburg industrial areas, on the other: the former gave first priority to their "peasant", land interests, whereas the latter put forward specifically proletarian demands (for higher pay, etc.).[1]

Nevertheless, the struggle against serfdom constituted the main objective content of the pre-reform protest actions of Russia's workers not yet separated from the peasants by an adequately clearcut social dividing line. It was not accidental that almost one-half of the protest actions over sixty years in the 19th century occurred during the two decades before the reform (1840-1860), while proletarian activity reached its peak in the latter half of the fifties, i.e., by the time the first revolutionary situation had taken shape in the country. Over the five years directly preceding the reform there were as many labour disturbances in the country as in the decade before. Factory "riots" of that time were obviously similar in form to peasant protest.

Towards the end of the pre-reform period the labour struggle began to show more and more clear proletarian class motives which heralded, according to A. M. Pankratova, the imminent strike battles of the industrial proletariat.[2] Nevertheless, in the first post-reform decade labour protest was still spontaneous, accidental, and unorganised. Its scale and intensity were on the whole insignificant: ten strikes and a little over forty disturbances occurred in the period between 1861-1869.

At the same time, labour unrest in the sixties was in general still closely linked with the struggle to uproot the vestiges of serfdom. Significantly, most of the disturbances and strikes mentioned above took place in the early post-reform years (until 1864). These protest actions were in fact an extension of the anti-feudal riots of the pre-reform period in a new situation. In the workers' disturbances (mostly seasonal peasant workers) their hatred of their landlords manifested itself with equal if not greater vehemency than their hatred of the factory owners.

This also determined the localisation of labour unrest in the sixties. It affected mainly government industries, primarily in the Urals, where almost one half of all disturbances took place. Labour disturbances continued also in the Central Industrial Region, the biggest of which was the strike at Morozov's manufactory in Orekhovo-Zuyevo in 1863.[3]

---

[1] Cf. *A History of the Working Class in Russia...*, p. 65.

[2] See A. M. Pankratova, "Labour Unrest in Russia Under Serfdom in the First Half of the 19th Century" (Introductory article).—In: *The Labour Movement in 19th-Century Russia*, Vol. I, Part I, Moscow, 1955, p. 12 (in Russian).

[3] For greater detail see: *A History of the Working Class in Russia...*, p. 69 and others, p. 74.

Rising to a struggle the workers expressed their indignation at the arduous conditions of work, the tyranny, rudeness and cruelty of the management, the use of corporal punishment at factories. Rioting workers demanded a shorter working day, a reduction in fines, and higher wages. Just as in the West European countries in the early 19th century, the workers in Russia vented their wrath on factory equipment, breaking up mechanisms, smashing windows in factory buildings, looting shops and offices of their oppressors—the factory owners. Striking workers did not advance independent class demands. Their movement continued to be spontaneous in accordance with the initial stage in the struggle of the emerging proletariat.

From the latter half of the 19th century the strike as a form of labour struggle began to be used by the working class in the colonial and economically dependent countries.

In England's "white colony"—*Australia*—the labour movement was given powerful impetus by a revolt which broke out at Victoria's gold mines in 1854; as Marx pointed out, describing this revolt, "the resistance to the monopolies linked with the colonial bureaucracy was initiated by the workers".[1] In the same year Newcastle's miners went on strike and achieved a wage raise after three weeks of stubborn struggle. New strikes of Newcastle miners flared up in 1855 and 1861. Each time the strikers managed to hold out for four to six weeks.[2]

A peculiar combination of strikes with unorganised riots was characteristic of the early period of the labour movement in Latin America. In *Chile* from the time of the first strike struggles in the mid-19th century to the end of the sixties there were 15 strikes and disturbances. Taking part in them were the garment workers of Santiago (1849), the miners of Small Severa (1851), the shoe-makers of Valparaiso (1853), and others.[3] In 1841 there was a large strike of building workers in Havana, *Cuba*.[4] In the latter half of the fifties the strike movement also began in *Brazil*; its initial landmarks were the strike of the workers of an English gas company in Rio de Janeiro late in 1857 and early in 1858, the solidarity strike of the capital's printers in January 1858, a large railwaymen's strike in Barra do Pirai in 1863, and other protest actions.[5]

---

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, Bd. 11, S. 106.

[2] For greater detail see: K. V. Malakhovsky, *History of the Australian Union*, Moscow, 1971, p. 104 (in Russian).

[3] Ramírez Necochea Hernán, *Historia del movimiento obrero en Chile*, Santiago de Chile, 1956, pp. 133-34.

[4] A. M. Zorina, *The Labour Movement in Cuba in the Period from the First Protest Actions of the Proletariat to the Founding of the Communist Party*, Moscow, 1975, p. 44.

[5] B. I. Koval, *The History of the Brazilian Proletariat (1857-1967)*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 54-56 (in Russian).

In *China* where industrial workers were the first to experience the oppression of the foreign bourgeoisie, the very first strikes which took place in the forties and fifties were directed against the foreign exploiters. Already at that time the Chinese workers gained some experience of struggle against colonialism. During the siege of Kwangchow by Anglo-French troops in 1858 more than 20,000 municipal and transport workers of Hongkong went on strike and left for the mainland.

A common feature of all strikes in the period under review, wherever they might occur, was that the strikers put forward mainly economic demands: the establishment of a minimum wage or a wage raise, timely payments of wages, a shortening or at least the preservation of the former working day, cessation of work for a dinner break, on church holidays and Sundays, payment for overtime work at not lower than conventional rates, the abolition of fines and all kinds of deductions from wages, etc. At the same time, the level of demands gradually increased. Initially the workers came forward with some individual demand. Later they turned to a struggle for the satisfaction of a number of their economic needs. At first the workers came out, as a rule, for some concrete reason, against some direct action infringing their interests, and in defence of the status quo. In time they presented demands that went beyond purely defensive ones.

Another distinction of the early strike movement was that everywhere, even in England, its most resourceful and active force was at first the handicraft and manufactory proletariat, skilled workmen of the craftsman type (hand-loom weavers and spinners, shoe-makers, harness-makers, bakers, building workers, stone-masons, shipyard carpenters, printers, etc.), as well as individual categories of the large-scale industry proletariat (miners, less often smelters). These groups of proletarians had certain *traditions* of strike struggles which had taken shape even before the Industrial Revolution. The factory workers, however, had not and could not have such experience, because the factory proletariat had formed but recently. The process of integration of the heterogeneous elements from town and country who had just begun to "mix in the factory melting-pot" was in its earliest stage. The ranks of factory workers were joined by people who had lost their former but had not yet formed new social relations and were not yet prepared for joint organised actions. Moreover, most of the factory workers (in the textile industry at any rate) were women and children.

That was why in the period of the July monarchy in France the number of strikes at large factories was roughly one-third of those among the workers of the crafts. In textile production where the statistical index of strikes affecting relatively large enterprises is the highest (82 strikes out of 98 in large-scale industry, including the

mining industry), the largest number of strikes, and best organised for that matter, occurred in trades not yet affected by mechanisation (silk-weaving, ribbon-making, etc.). The share of strikes involving cottage industry workers and apprentices of small workshops was also very large.

Gradually, however, the factory workers trained, united and organised by the "very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself"[1] joined in the strike movement.

The development of the strike movement involving a steadily growing mass of the workers marked the transition of the class struggle of the emerging industrial proletariat to a new, higher stage. The class *instinct* inherent in the proletarians in the course of a strike developed into a *class position* which began to assume a rational character.

The strikes were a powerful factor in the further development of the rudiments of the class awareness of the proletariat, because they showed the workers the power of association and taught them to give an organised rebuff to the entrepreneurs. Their joint actions exerted a profound influence on the strikers, enhanced their understanding of their common class interests. Lenin wrote in this connection: "A strike teaches workers to understand what the strength of the employers and what the strength of the workers consists in; it teaches them not to think of their own employer alone and not of their own immediate workmates alone but of all the employers, the whole class of capitalists and the whole class of workers."[2]

The strikes strengthened the spirit of class solidarity also because they required great courage of the workers. "It is, in truth, no trifle for a working-man who knows want from experience," Engels noted, "to face it with wife and children, to endure hunger and wretchedness for months together, and stand firm and unshaken through it all."

Emphasising the courage of English workers who went on strike especially often, Engels wrote: "What is death, what the galleys which await the French revolutionist, in comparison with gradual starvation, with the daily sight of a starving family, with the certainty of future revenge on the part of the bourgeoisie, all of which the English working-man chooses in preference to subjection under the yoke of the property-holding class?"[3] Many characteristic features of early strikes evidence that the strike movement was a stage in the transformation of the class instinct into something on a higher plane—the class position of ever larger groups of the proletariat. For example, already in that period the workers discovered and used

[1] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 715.
[2] V. I. Lenin, "On Strikes", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 316.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 513.

various methods of strike struggles, which were developed at later times. The sailors of Hull, Newcastle and South Shields, England, who went on strike in 1815 occupied the docks.[1] When the cotton-mill workers of Lille, France, struck work in September 1839, the strike affected at first a few enterprises, while other mills continued operating. Then the strikers "invaded" these mills and before long the strike spread to "almost all cotton-mills in the city",[2] as the local prosecutor admitted later. The strikes of Lancashire spinners in 1810, as well as in 1830 developed as "rolling strikes": individual groups of workers first in one, then in a few localities alternately joined in the struggle. The English cotton-printers also used this method.

Solidarity strikes became a conspicuous form of the strike movement in that period.

In 1826 the paper-makers of Thiers, France, went on strike in solidarity with their comrade dismissed without justification.[3] In 1836 the workers of Nantes, France—men, women and children—came out against the judicial reprisal against the stone-masons condemned for their participation in a strike.[4] When the wages at Lowell, Massachusetts, were cut 15 per cent early in 1834, the women textile workers held several protest meetings, writes the US Marxist historian P. Foner. "A few days later the leader of the movement was fired. As she left the mill, she waved her bonnet in the air as a signal to the others who were watching from the windows. They struck, assembled about her and eight hundred marched in a procession about the town.... On the second day of their turn-out the strikers issued a proclamation entitled *Union Is Power*."[5]

Class solidarity during strikes was expressed in a variety of forms: more and more often joint actions united workers of one and the same as well as different trades. In the light of real facts one can clearly see the futility of the efforts of some bourgeois and reformist researchers (G. Hardach, E. Dolléans, and G. Dehove, and others) to disprove the Marxist thesis on the growing class-forming role of the first conflicts between labour and capital,[6] to the effect that the impor-

[1] See E. B. Chernyak, *The Democratic Movement in England...*, p. 74.
[2] See F. V. Potemkin, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 127-28.
[3] Jean Bruhat, op. cit., p. 211.
[4] See F. V. Potemkin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 117.
[5] Philip S. Foner, *History...*, op. cit., p. 109.
[6] Following E. Dolléans and G. Dehove G. H. Hardach alleges, for instance, that the strikes and coalitions in France in the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century "by no means expressed the growing class solidarity of the workers", but were inspired (contrary, as he claimed, to the thesis of the *Communist Manifesto* quoted by this historian) by the "spirit of guild exclusiveness and a striving to ward off competition from unskilled labour". (G. H. Hardach, op. cit., S. 177-78.)

tance of these conflicts does not lie in the transient victories of the proletariat. "The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result but in the ever-expanding union of the workers."[1]

In 1840, for instance, the striking miners of a few towns of the department of Nièvre united; the colliers of all mines armed themselves with cudgels and axes and left with their families for the town of Decize, one of the mining centres of the department, and thereby achieved a reduction of bread prices and the abandonment of a planned wage cut. True, they had to give up the concessions they had gained when the authorities had moved an impressive number of troops into the strike area.[2] The Parisian tailors in 1840 were supported by their colleagues in other cities, as well as by the capital's workers of other trades. During the three winter months different sections of labour became involved consecutively, one after another, in the strike struggles under the slogans of a shorter working day and higher wages until finally, early in September, a massive strike broke out, which developed into an attempt at an uprising of a republican character; however, it was nipped in the bud.[3]

The growing labour solidarity was indicated by the increasingly frequent co-operation between skilled workmen and factory workers. For example, the strike of children workers in the textile mills of Paterson, USA, who demanded a shortening of the inordinately long working day, the abolition of extortionate fines and the system of shop coupons issued in lieu of wages was supported with funds raised by the workmen of Newark and New York; as a result the entrepreneurs agreed to shorten the working day for children by 1.5-2 hours.[4]

Even the earliest strikes required a modicum of agreement between the actions of a definite group of workers. The degree of organisation grew along with the development of the strike movement: in some cases the workers agreed on a strike in advance, in others they drew up their common demands in the course of their strike struggles. In other words, they waged their struggle on the basis of a common, if only elementary at first, *programme* of action.

One of the signs of the increasing organisation of the strike struggles and also of the enhanced level of the class awareness of the workers was at times the very *choice of the time* for a strike. Originally strikes most commonly occurred in periods of industrial slumps and economic crises. Such strikes stood little chance of success: during a business depression the entrepreneurs were not inclined to agree to concessions. However, already in the early period of the strike

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 493.
[2] See F. V. Potemkin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 132.
[3] See Ibid., pp. 140-50.
[4] See Philip S. Foner, op. cit., p. 111-12.

movement the workers sometimes deliberately struck work when business activity was high, as though "planning" strikes with due regard to the general economic situation. For example, in 1831 the miners of Alés, France, went on strike on learning that the entrepreneurs were in extreme need of coal at the time. Similarly, the wool-weavers of Lodeve and Castres (important textile industry centres in Southern France) struck in 1840 during an industrial "boom" (the strikers expected that they would certainly compel the employers to make concessions).

In different cases the growth of elements of organisation and unity among the workers manifested itself in different ways. First reserve funds were set up to aid the strikers (the cotton-weavers of Lille in 1839, the wool-weavers and miners of Anzin and Rive-de-Gier in the forties, etc.). Sanctions were used against the most intractable factory owners. In Castres in 1840 the workers agreed to prevent the most stubborn factory owners from hiring manpower after the completion of the strike.

In 1844 the miners of Rive-de-Gier took measures in good time to oppose strike-breakers by setting up pickets at the mine gates. In addition, they formed strikers' squads on round-the-clock duty ready to come to the aid of the pickets if necessary. Significantly, the miners did not smash up machines but took them apart and put them out of action temporarily. Contemporaries were greatly impressed by the organisation of the strike. "The strike is evidently excellently organised," the Lyons prosecutor reported to the Minister of Justice, describing the miners' strike as a "superbly organised rebellion."[1]

Strikes were often remarkably persistent. The strikers displayed extraordinary courage and staunchness. The Lancashire spinners were on strike during four months in 1810, and the strike in Manchester in 1829 lasted for six months. Although in that period strikes were mainly local, most commonly involving workers of one trade (or one enterprise), at times, however, they came on in waves affecting many industries. This happened in Birmingham in 1791-1793 where workers of engineering, gunpowder and other works went on strike in succession. This recurred in Lancashire in 1818 and 1826 (cotton-spinners, miners, etc.). In the summer of 1840 the strikes in Paris followed the same pattern of a "chain reaction", workers of different industries joining in the strike struggles consecutively.[2]

At times strike affected fairly large areas; in England in October 1816 the metal workers and miners of a few counties went on strike. The number of strikers reached impressive figures for that period;

[1] E. V. Tarle, *The Great Miners' Strike in Rive de Gier...*, pp. 297. 300, 311.
[2] See F. V. Potemkin, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 137.

for example, 40,000 people took part in each of the afore-mentioned strikes of Scotland's hand-loom weavers (1804-1805 and 1812), 30,000 in the spinners' strike in 1810, and the Ashton spinners' strike in 1830 stopped some 20,000 factory workers, etc.[1]

Thus, everywhere strikes were, as Engels put it, "a military school of the working-men in which they prepare themselves for the great struggle which cannot be avoided; they are the pronunciamentos of single branches of industry that these too have joined the labour movement."[2] Engels described strikes as indispensable precisely as "schools of war" of the proletariat "against the supremacy of the bourgeoisie".[3] For his part, Lenin described strikes as "...one of the great clashes between the developing proletarian class and its enemies",[4] as "...one of the most profound and most powerful manifestations"[5] of its class struggle.

In principle, the new content of the strike movement inasmuch as it acquires an increasingly massive and systematic character consists in that the protest actions of individual groups of workers, whatever immediate goals they may pursue in any given case, turn in effect into a struggle of the working class against the capitalist system as a whole. "...Strikes, which arise out of the very nature of capitalist society," Lenin wrote, "signify the beginning of the working-class struggle against that system of society."[6]

Although strikes were predominantly a form of the economic struggle of the working class the gradually growing connection of the early strike struggles with the *general political struggle* was an increasingly salient characteristic of their development. That was a natural phenomenon. As pointed out above, the working class had just begun to emerge from the midst of the petty-bourgeois population. Broad sections of the young proletariat were linked by thousands of threads with the plebeian strata in town and country, with small craftsmen, shop-owners, and peasants. At the same time, the workers naturally joined in the political struggle waged by the bourgeoisie in the name of the interests of its class—at first against the aristocracy and later against those strata of the bourgeoisie itself whose interests had come in conflict with the progress of industry. In this struggle the bourgeoisie had to rely on the masses, to appeal to the people as a whole, and hence to the proletariat, to call upon

[1] See A. L. Morton and George Tate, op. cit., p. 35; H. A. Turner, op. cit., pp. 73-74.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 512.

[3] Ibid.

[4] V. I. Lenin, "The St. Petersburg Strike", *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 91.

[5] V. I. Lenin, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back", *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 261.

[6] V. I. Lenin, "On Strikes", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 314.

it for help and thereby to involve it in the polical movement. The bourgeoisie "in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover yet, for a time, able to do so," Marx and Engels declared in the *Communist Manifesto.*[1]

As a result, the emerging working class assimilated from the bourgeoisie elements of its own "political education"; drawn by its most progressive factions in battles whose purpose was the continued bourgeois reformation of the old society, it came forward from the very outset in the ranks of the *active fighters for democracy.*

This was how a trend toward the development of the economic into political struggle arose within the labour movement which was making its first steps; both these types of social activity combined with one another. Consequently, this trend had come into being even *before* the working class realised the need to abolish the rule of capital. It took the form of a more or less active involvement of definite strata and contingents of the working class in the conquest and then in the consolidation of bourgeois democracy and its spread in width and in depth. In that stage of the labour movement that was the central trend of the conversion of the economic into political struggle. Eventually it is precisely the struggle for full political freedom that is the starting point of "any 'serious' working-class movement."[2] The working class has carried the banner of this struggle for democratic rights and freedoms from the time of its first protest actions through many decades of class battles down to the present time.

In the late 18th and the early 19th century the broad involvement of the *English* proletariat in the movement for radical democratic reforms became an important aspect of its growing political activity. The ideas of the Great French Revolution of the late 18th century exerted a tremendous influence on England's workers and craftsmen in this respect. It was supported by sympathetic forward-looking elements of the emerging working class associated in "Corresponding Societies" (the first of them, the London Corresponding Society, was founded in 1792, and the shoe-maker Thomas Hardy became its leader). Later, organisations of this kind affiliated scores of thousands of workers and craftsmen, who demanded manhood suffrage and equal representation in Parliament.[3] Hunger and privations prompted the industrial proletariat, just as the semi-proletarian sections of the population, primarily in the industrial regions,

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 492.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 211.

[3] For greater detail see: A. L. Morton and George Tate, *The British Labour Movement*, op. cit., p. 23; E. B. Chernyak, *The Mass Movement in England...*, Chapter 2.

to join the ranks of advocates of radical democratic reforms, of fighters for a parliamentary reform.

The movement of 1816-1818 was especially broad and massive.[1] Labour activity in that democratic movement frightened the ruling oligarchy which more and more often resorted to terror against strikers and their leaders, and the participants in mass meetings called by bourgeois radicals. The events on August 16, 1819, when Manchester's authorities dispersed a mass rally in Petersfield Square having moved in cavalry against the workers assembled there, mostly weavers, including women, went down as a tragic day in the history of the working class of England. Eleven persons were sabred to death, and over 500 were wounded. This brutal massacre came to be known as the "battle of Peterloo" (the Hussars who dispersed the rally had taken part in the Battle of Waterloo against Napoleon in 1815).[2] The progressive British historian E. P. Thompson quite reasonably said about the Peterloo events: "There is no term for this but class war."[3] After the bloody massacre on August 16 the government promulgated six acts, which brought the repressive measures against the democratic forces to their climax: a ban on meetings with more than fifty participants, investment of local authorities with powers to search the homes of "suspects", etc.

The strike in Scotland in April 1820—*the first general political strike* in the history of the world labour movement—was a milestone event in the British labour movement of the early 19th century. It was directed by a clandestine radical revolutionary organisation founded in Glasgow in 1819 which had been preparing, jointly with the radicals of England's industrial areas, the overthrow of the government. The hand-loom weavers, miners, engineering workers, smelters, and cotton-spinners of Glasgow, the weavers, stone-masons, and cotton-spinners of Paisley, the factory workers of Johnson (near Paisley) —a total of over 60,000 persons—joined in the strike. The failure of the revolutionary initiatives of the radicals unable to provide leadership to the masses who had risen to a struggle caused the defeat of the strike.

In *France*, the gradual increase in the political activity of the workers, which was reflected above all in the specific character of the strikes, became especially manifest in the period of the July monarchy. From the early thirties the strike struggles became ubiquitous and more systematic than before, often assumed an offensive character, and, which was highly significant, a clear republican colour. The more and more frequent clashes between strikers and

---

[1] See E. B. Chernyak, *The Democratic Movement in England...*, pp. 74-130.
[2] For greater detail see: Ibid., pp. 202-14.
[3] E. P. Thompson, op. cit., p. 686.

the gendarmerie; cruel police reprisals against strikers; their arrests and trials; labour rallies where leaflets containing threats addressed to the King and republican appeals (1839, 1841) were circulated; such events as what was, in fact, a general strike on September 7, 1840 in Paris, during which revolutionary songs rang out on the streets, while workers of the St. Antoine suburb turned out for a demonstration and clashed with police, calling out: "To arms! Vengeance on the lackeys of the tyrants!" showed that developments obviously tended towards a republican rebellion. In view of many strikers' links with secret republican and communist societies and the growth of the political activity of the workers, the ever closer combination of economic and political struggles in the labour movement were obvious. These trends were further developed in such outstanding events of the class struggle of the European proletariat as the Lyons uprisings in France, Chartism in England and the revolt of the Silesian weavers in Germany.[1]

In the late 18th and the early 19th century the labour movement began to show a political orientation also in the *United States* where in the twenties and thirties first American labour parties were founded in many cities.

Thus, the mass labour movement in the period under review was distinguished by a combination of different forms of struggle characterising the stages of the maturation of the emerging industrial proletariat, the enhancement of its class awareness. The traditional aims and methods of labour struggle dating from the manufactory period combined with new ones, generated by radical changes both in the composition and the position of the proletariat in the conditions of the Industrial Revolution and increasingly assumed an anti-capitalist content. From hunger riots and the destruction of machines, from sporadic strikes in which only artisan and manufactory workmen were originally involved, the proletariat, including the factory workers, changed over to a systematic, stubborn resistance to the bourgeoisie; from separate spontaneous local actions to increasingly united, co-ordinated actions on a broad front of struggle, in which the proletarians of large-scale capitalist industry took a most vigorous part along with artisan and manufactory workmen. Fighting on this front and at times going over to the offensive the working class not only upheld its current economic interests but also came out as a courageous champion of the ideas of democracy and social progress.

Having in mind the traits of duality in the character of the early labour movement, the British historian E. Hobsbawm figuratively compared the aspirations of the proletarians with those of the immi-

[1] See Chapter 5.

grants coming from Europe to the United States and at first dreaming of coming back home; in his words, the "bulk of industrial workers in all countries began, like Americans, as first-generation immigrants from pre-industrial societies.... And like all first-generation immigrants, they looked backwards as much as forwards...".[1] However, as time went on, the new content of the class battles of the proletariat became more and more manifest, and their new direction grew ever clearer. The gradually developed new, purely proletarian ways and means of social activity expressed the consolidation of labour solidarity in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

FIRST LABOUR ORGANISATIONS. THE ORIGINATION OF TRADE UNIONS

As the class struggle waged by the emerging proletariat widened and its awareness of its common interests increased, first labour organisations—trade unions—came into being. Fighting oppression and poverty, protesting against their rightlessness, "the workers begin to form combinations (Trades' Unions)", says the *Communist Manifesto*, "against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occassional revolts".[2] Speaking of labour coalitions and associations, Marx and Engels meant trade unions. Their appearance was a crucially important stage in the development of the labour movement. The formation of such coalitions and associations was a long step forward in the transition of the proletarians from separate to joint actions, from disunity to organisation, from dispersion to the unity of forces for a more staunch and effective resistance to the employers. Thus, the trade unions which vindicated, above all, the daily needs of the workers became the earliest centres of their consolidation in the struggle for their practical, day-to-day, vital interests—against hunger, poverty, exploitation, and humiliation of the workers by the capitalists and their managers, "bulwarks for the workers in their struggles with the employers".[3] It was around and through the trade unions that the proletarians united for a struggle against the horrors of wage slavery. That is why the formation of the trade unions, in Lenin's phrase, was "a tremendous step forward for the working class in the early days of capitalist development". He regarded them as "a transition from the workers' disunity

[1] E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels. Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1959, p. 108.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 493.

[3] Ibid., p. 210.

and helplessness *to the rudiments* of class organisation".[1] Indeed, after a relatively short period the trade unions turned into a powerful force of concentrated resistance of the working class to the bourgeoisie.

The emergence of the trade unions, for all the specificity of this process in individual countries connected with the concrete historical peculiarities of the formation of the proletariat and the development of its social activity, is nevertheless characterised by some similar features sometimes common to all countries or to only some of them. For example, in a number of West European countries, especially in France and Germany, the old organisations of workmen formed in the pre-industrial epoch still continued to function in the early phases of association of the embattled proletariat. These were the secret societies of journeymen (French companionships, analogous German unions, etc.). Affiliating workmen of small artisan workshops and various manufactories, they preserved as before their corporate image (ritual isolation enforced by statutes, the internal hierarchy and discipline, traditional customs, symbols of distinction—staffs, bands, watchwords, nicknames, etc.). These unions were also kept together by their traditional, purely corporate functions, one of the main of which was to maintain a high level of professional skill (hence the wandering of journeymen with the object of learning all the "secrets" of a craft, the requirement for submitting a "masterpiece" as an indispensable precondition for admission to a companionship). In the early 19th century, just as in bygone days, these corporate functions were performed with the aid of a large system of long-established institutions (eating-houses run by a "matron", the custom of a monetary grant for travel expenses, etc.).[2]

At the same time, in the new socio-economic conditions created by the Industrial Revolution, which increasingly undermined the artisan industries, an ever greater significance in the activity of journeymen's unions was assumed by their protective functions which had taken a fairly clear form already in the preceding period; just as at that time the journeymen's unions came to the aid of their members, helping them to find jobs, boycotting individual entrepreneurs, imposing bans on employment in whole cities, organising strikes, etc. To lend the resistance to the entrepreneurs the greatest effectiveness by achieving full unity of their own membership, in the early 19th century journeymen's unions resorted to such a means as impos-

---

[1] V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism—An Infantile Disorder", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 50.

[2] Emile Coornaert, *Les compagnonnages en France du moyen age à nos jours*, Les Éditions ouvrières, Paris, 1966, p. 178 ss., 188 ss., 214 ss., 227 ss., 257 ss., 314 ss. e.a.; Elisabeth Todt, Hand Radandt, op. cit., S. 38 ff.

ing fines on the "yellow", i.e., those who evaded participation in a general strike.[1]

Journeymen's unions were fairly numerous. In France, a classical country of such associations, they existed in the early 19th century among stone-masons, bricklayers, carpenters, harness-makers, glaziers, tanners, joiners, roofers, saddlers, knife-makers, nail-makers and workmen of many other trades. Similar organisations existed, although on a much smaller scale, in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden.

Unquestionably, the journeymen's unions played a substantial part in the rise of the trade union movement, acting at first as strongpoints of the economic struggle of the artisan and manufactory proletariat. However, although such unions more and more vigorously undertook to accomplish its tasks and in this sense were a kind of the vanguard of the emerging trade unions, nevertheless, the later development of the trade union movement (in the countries where journeymen's organisations existed) could not be kept up by associations of this kind. Companionships and similar organisations with their inherent particularism and narrow professional exclusiveness were in the final analysis anachronisms. In the situation of steady exacerbation of the class struggle of the proletariat, the involvement in it of broad masses of the people and the increasing aspirations of different labour groups for united actions against capital the reactionary traits of these unions which belonged in essence to a past stage in the development of the working class became clearly manifest. They were thoroughly pervaded with the centuries-old sectarian spirit of exclusiveness and intolerance of one another, the spirit of rivalry and mutual hostility. In the words of Marx and Engels, in the period of the formation of the industrial proletariat the workers still "form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition".[2] The practices of journeymen's unions by themselves not only reflected this fact but largely contributed to the continued sentiments of rivalry among the workers. Unions with different rituals (often affiliating workmen of the same trades) were at loggerheads and often engaged in bloody feuds, leaving killed and wounded on city streets. For example, in 1808 there was a fight between shoe-makers and leather-dressers in Angouléme, in 1817 fighting among stone-masons in Lunel lasted for several days, in 1820 building workers fought among themselves in Bordeaux, each time the success of one side was followed by wild exultation and singing "cannibalistic" songs, as a contemporary commented, as if a victory had been won in a real war.[3]

[1] Maurice Bouvier-Ajam, op. cit. p. 85.
[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 492.
[3] Emile Coornaert, *Les compagnonnages en France...*, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

The sentiments of solidarity displayed within these unions simultaneously opposed them to one another and, therefore, they were unable to overcome the disunity arising out of competition on the labour market between members of identical or related trades. Naturally, organisations of this type no longer met the objective requirements of the development of the class struggle of the emerging industrial proletariat. The introduction of machine production and the factory system was accompanied, as we have seen, by the loss of their skills by craftsmen, mass migrations, the formation of earlier non-existent categories of industrial workers. The new social status and the way of life of the masses of the proletarians, which accounted for their aspirations for unity came in conflict with the principles of functioning of traditional journeymen's brotherhoods. In their own midst attempts were made repeatedly to put an end to mutual rivalry and feuds; however, neither the congress of delegates from a number of French companionships assembled in Bordeaux in 1821, nor the efforts made by "reformers" in the late thirties and early forties to reorganise these unions and associated with the names of A. Perdiguier and Flora Tristan could solve the problem.[1] After 1830 the companionships increasingly tended to decline, losing their influence and gradually becoming deprived of any practical significance as a real factor of proletarian organisation (although the remnants of companionships have survived in France to this day).

Other associations affiliating wider sections of the workers and more correspondent with the new conditions and the requirements of the class struggle now became centres of professional organisation of the working class. These associations formed outside the framework of journeymen's unions, although of necessity they assimilated some historically tested aspects of their organisation and activity. In other words, the emerging proletariat had to associate anew, but it could not ignore the positive experience of the past in accordance with the level of its own development and its possibilities.

This explains to a considerable extent the most typical feature characteristic of the emergence of the trade union movement everywhere. Like journeymen's brotherhoods and in contrast to the later formed trade unions of the contemporary type, first associations of workers were formed *according to a trade* and often even according *to a narrow craft* (for example, unions of shipwrights, blanket-weavers, flax-weavers, silk-weavers, shirt cloth-weavers, cabinet-makers, locomotive engineers, steam engine-makers, iron foundrymen, copper smelters, etc.). Such associations were the simplest organisation accessible to workers coming from the midst of the artisans, which was necessary for joint actions in support

[1] Ibid., pp. 83-84.

of their demand for a decent wage, a shorter working day, better working conditions, etc. Indeed, many of these workers for the character of their occupations were but recently or still remained craftsmen, workmen of small and medium-sized workshops using manual labour or partly mechanised manufactories holding, as it were, an intermediate position between enterprises of the "pre-industrial" and "industrial" epochs. Even when they got a job at a factory, these people could not immediately adapt to the new factory environment, which levelled all of them in relation to the capitalist in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour;[1] it took time for them to draw closer together with their unfamiliar workmates performing other production operations in the neighbouring shops. Moreover, part of these workmen, even after they had become full-fledged factory workers, were still employed as skilled manpower and for the time being did not merge into the mass of factory workers. Finally, as has already been mentioned in another connection, in virtue of the uneven spread of machine production in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, many industries in general preserved their archaic image of artisan manufactories, and the artisan workmen initially accounted for the bulk of the manpower employed in industry, while the "factory" workers constituted the minority of the proletarian mass.[2]

All this predetermined the forms of labour associations; they were trade unions in the true sense of the word. Uniting by trade (but now for essentially different purposes and on a fundamentally different basis than journeymen's associations medieval in origin and constitution) the workers became capable to a definite extent of lessening competition among themselves on the labour market and of attenuating its pernicious consequences, if only partly.

In this way the pressure of the capitalists was opposed by the co-ordination efforts of definite groups of workers of the same trade (craft), though fairly narrow as yet but incomparably larger than in companionships and similar unions. The formation of precisely such group associations (according to trades) was also facilitated by the traditions of the guild system which had existed at one time almost in all West European countries and survived at places one

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 492.

[2] The following terminological observation of E. Hobsbawm is of interest. He pointed out the great role played by skilled workmen from the midst of the artisans in England's large-scale industry in the period under review: the notion "skilled worker" in English is conveyed by the word "engineer" (journeyman engineer) which also means "journeyman", "journeyman steam engine-maker").—E. J. Hobsbawm, "Les classes ouvrières anglaises et la culture depuis les débuts de la révolution industrielle".—In: *Niveaux de culture et groupes sociaux. Actes du colloque réuni de 7 au 9 mai 1966 à l'École normale supérieure*, Paris, La Haye, 1967, pp. 194, 197.

way or another also in the early decades of the 19th century (until 1848 at any rate). These traditions proved quite viable among yesterday's small craftsmen, journeymen and specialised manufactory workers, all the more so because the former journeymen's unions active as direct vehicles of these traditions continued to function in some countries. Of course, in the epoch of the developing Industrial Revolution the guild and other corporate artisan associations increasingly became anachronistic, but traditions, particularly when they have an objectively favourable soil for their preservation, invariably play a great role in social life. This was precisely the case in those times when a gravitation towards unity became manifest among industrial workers.

The first to tend towards organisation were, naturally, skilled workmen of the artisan-manufactory type, who had a historically more developed class instinct, a higher intellectual level and the level of class self-awareness, as well as (which was also of no small importance) a wider cultural outlook. It is indicative, for instance, that among the workers of the French metallurgical industry (and these were largely specialists) literate persons accounted for 25 to 80 per cent, according to a questionnaire of 1848 (depending on the area and the age group), whereas the proportion of literate farmhands was not higher than 10 to 20 per cent of all workers in this category.[1] The English hand-loom weavers, on the other hand, were the most educated part of the proletariat: according to 1840 data, in Glocestershire 57 per cent of the hand-weavers could read and write and only 8 per cent of them were totally illiterate (for comparison's sake, we may note, while running ahead, that among the workers arrested in 1842 for participation in Chartist actions only 13 per cent could read and write).[2] No less symptomatic is the fact that, as a rule, the first "ideological cadres" of the working class came precisely from the proletarian artisan strata: they belonged to the category of skilled workmen of the artisan type, cottage industry workers, etc. To be sure, the factory workers were also involved in the evolution of proletarian class consciousness. There is no reason to assume, as L. Uhen does, that large-scale production was a factor which, far from facilitating, even interfered with the understanding by the workers of their social community, the evolution among them of the sentiments of class solidarity, and so on.[3] Nevertheless, until the forties the main force of the proletarian movement had been precisely the skilled categories of workers which tended to decline with the development of large-scale industry.

---

[1] G. H. Hardach, op. cit., S. 86.
[2] E. J. Hobsbawm, *Les classes ouvrières anglaises et la culture...*, p. 194.
[3] Leo Uhen, op. cit., S. 47-48.

As a result of the impact of all the aforesaid factors of a socio-economic and historical nature the guild traditions inevitably surfaced in the process of forming first labour associations (since these were unions of *skilled* workmen); proletarian organisations were formed therefore like the old corporations of craftsmen and journeymen's brotherhoods which survived at places in the epoch of the Industrial Revolution, namely, according to "guilds", i.e., on the craft principle. Quite often new workers' associations reproduced, as it were, in a strongly modified form, it is true, the structure and sometimes the internal regulations of workmen's organisations (for example, under the regulations of the English trade unions of hand-loom weavers, the widow of a union member was not entitled to marry a person unaffiliated with a given union, and so on).

Besides the afore-mentioned features, the ways of the origination and organisation, and the character of the activity of first trade unions were also characterised by common or, at any rate, similar features. Their formation differed in time from country to country. In England labour associations appeared earlier than anywhere, as far back as the mid-18th century. The process of the workers' organisation by their respective trades went intensively among skilled workmen employed in the cotton mills, in the seventies and eighties among silk-weavers, and knitters. In the nineties it extended to many other trades and industries. It was precisely in that period that trade unions came into existence within the leading contingent of the emerging working class—the Lancashire spinners, as well as the Yorkshire wool weavers, the Sheffield hardware workmen, etc. Before the end of the 18th century, the unions had affiliated various groups of skilled manufactory workmen—shipwrights, cabinet-makers, tanners, brush-makers, basket-makers, trousers-seamsters, type-setters, paper-makers, and others, in whose midst the traditional occupational ties survived. In those years first organisations of miners and textile factory workers were founded in the northern and central counties.

In the late 18th and the early 19th century first labour unions formed in the United States (in 1792 the unions of hired shoe-makers in Philadelphia, of tailors in Baltimore, of printers in New York; in 1796 of New York furniture-makers, in 1803 of New York shipwrights, etc.) and in France (in 1790 Parisian printers' club, in 1791 the carpenters' brotherhood in the capital, the port of Paris society of stevedores, etc.). Later trade unions were set up in other European countries: in the twenties and thirties in Germany (insurance offices of weavers, cotton-printers, printshop workers, and others), in the thirties and forties in Belgium (the union of hat-makers in 1838, of printshop workers in 1842; however, the first organisation of factory workers—the weavers and spinners of Ghent—was founded as late as 1857); in the first half of the forties in Spain (the weavers'

mutual aid society in Barcelona, and others); beginning with the forties and fifties in Italy (mainly in Lombardy, Piedmont and Toscana), in Switzerland, and in the fifties and sixties in Sweden.

Also at that time, in the latter half of the 19th century, trade unions were founded in some colonial, semi-colonial and economically backward countries; in the fifties and sixties trade unions appeared in Australia (of building workers, miners, etc.) and in individual states of Latin America (in 1853 the mutual aid societies of printshop workers in Santiago and Rio de Janeiro, in 1855 in Valparaiso, in 1857 in Buenos Aires, in the late fifties a number of similar societies in Havana (of tobacco and port workers, etc.), in the sixties brotherhoods and societies of textile workers, stone-masons, tailors and printers in Mexico, etc. In 1858 a local association of packers—the first organisation of Chinese transport workers—was set up in Kwangchow.

In spite of the inevitable variations of this process in time and the diversity of the initial forms of associations, it went through approximately the same stages everywhere. The main two of them everywhere were as follows: mutual aid societies which initially confined their activities predominantly to charitable work and unions for active labour resistance to the entrepreneurs which later arose out of them or were founded independently. In addition, there were also intermediate forms of organisation which varied from country to country: insurance offices, temporary strike coalitions, etc. In individual specific cases the distance between the main stages of development was unequal; the boundary between them was often erased altogether so that practically mutual aid societies since the time of their institution functioned as trade unions.

The most striking picture of the professional consolidation of the workers in the period of "early industrialism" is presented by the history of the origination of labour associations in *England*, which has been studied in detail. Originally, many of them were primitive amorphous organisations on a local scale. Often the starting-point for founding an organisation were more or less regular get-togethers of workmen of an industrial town (or a city district) in a pub they frequented, which was at the same time a "labour exchange" of its own kind (it was here that entrepreneurs usually came in search of additional manpower). In time such comradely get-togethers turned into professional clubs. Here reports were made on the demand for manpower, on wage rates, on conflicts with employers at various places, the problems of relations with entrepreneurs were discussed and decided, demands were formulated concerning wage rates, donations were collected for the benefit of needy comrades. Also here decisions were taken on joint actions against employers, be it a petition for a wage increase or a refusal to work for low wages,

etc. A club was as yet an unformalised association but to a definite extent it already performed trade union functions: "collective bargaining by riot...", as E. Hobsbawm defined the essence of the activities of such associations.[1]

Another primary type of trade union (close to a club) which became widespread in the 18th century were friendly societies. Their purpose was to render material aid to members in a period of sickness, to provide money for funerals, to help jobless members, to meet the expenses involved in a resettlement in another city (the sum of an allowance varying with the time required for travel or with distance). Such societies spontaneously sprang up throughout the country, mainly in the seventies to nineties. Since societies' funds composed of admission and weekly (monthly) fees were kept in a special box, these organisations themselves were called box-clubs. Many of them had printed charters subject to registration, under a parliamentary act of 1793. According to surviving records, there were a few thousands of such societies in England towards the turn of the 19th century. As testified by a contemporary, in certain localities and cities, for instance, in the Sheffield area nearly all their residents were members of friendly societies.[2] According to data for 1801, there were more than 800 of them in industrial Lancashire alone (more than anywhere else), and hand-loom weavers were prominent among their members.[3]

Mutual aid societies by no means always limited the sphere of their activity to charity alone. The workers were primarily interested in the problems of wages, the length of the working day, and employment. The funds of societies were often used to *give financial aid to workers on strike*. Thus, friendly societies, just as clubs, practically operated as trade unions in the true sense of the word, upholding the economic interests of the workers in their struggle against the employers. In general, there was no distinct boundary between the mutual aid societies and trade unions in the direct sense. To avoid repressions quite a few trade unions disguised themselves as clubs (for instance, the clubs of London's carpenters and plumbers). At the same time, one-third (or one-quarter) of all friendly societies which existed in the early nineties of the 18th century refused to register in accordance with the law of 1793 in the hope of being able thereby to evade the government-imposed

---

[1] E. J. Hobsbawm, *Industry...*, p. 70.

[2] F. M. Eden, "Observations on Friendly Societies", London, 1801, pp. 5-7.—In: Witt Bowden, *Industrial Society in England Towards the End of the Eighteenth Century*, New York, Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1965, p. 298.

[3] Duncan Bythell, *The Handloom Weavers. A Study in the English Cotton Industry During the Industrial Revolution*, Cambridge. At the University Press, 1969, p. 182.

restraints on their action beyond the simple function of the box-clubs.[1]

The daily activities of the trade unions consisted in that, while seeking to protect the workers against the "tyranny and neglect of the bourgeoisie",[2] they formulated and presented to the employers the terms of hire of their members (wage rates, etc.)[3], conducting negotiations with the employers collectively as a united force; they organised actions for an improvement in the working conditions, for higher wages, shorter working hours, against the employment of unskilled labour by the entrepreneurs, etc.; they pressed for the enforcement of a rule whereby only members of the union were entitled to employment. Employers who had violated this rule or any other terms agreed upon binding on all were threatened with a general boycott and a strike. Sometimes a trade union formed during a strike. The provisional committee elected by workers to direct a strike formed the core of a future permanent union in a given trade.

The trade unions took vigorous steps to prevent strike-breaking: workmen who had agreed to work at wage rates unacceptable to the union members and contrary to their will were publicly ridiculed, threatened, abused or even beaten up. In the union charters strike-breakers (scabs) were compared to "traitors to the homeland", and their conduct was strongly denounced. The charter of the amalgamated cotton-spinners' society of Manchester forbade its members on pain of expulsion to take a job at any enterprise where a strike was on. The struggle against strike-breaking everywhere held an important place in the activities of first trade unions; in the US labour unions, for example, strike-breaking was considered the gravest offence on the part of a union member; a strike-breaker was expelled immediately. As far back as the turn of the 19th century, labour unions in different cities of the United States exchanged lists of strike-breakers, which at that time was a specific method to express solidarity between different local unions in a given trade. One direction of the activity of the English trade unions was the presentation of petitions to parliament and courts of law requesting compliance with the old laws which limited the number of apprentices under one master, established an obligatory seven-year term of apprenticeship, fixed wages rates—laws incompatible with the development of industrial capitalism and practically, and later legally, losing their binding force more and more.

---

[1] Witt Bowden, op. cit., pp. 297, 301.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 504.

[3] The first agreement between workers and employers dates from 1785; it was concluded by one of the type-setters' unions (see Sidney and Beatrice Webb. *The History of Trade Unionism*, Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1920. p. 27.

Concern for compliance with these archaic labour laws in the epoch of absolutism, while being a fairly important function of the early trade unions, was reflected in their charters. The very composition of many trade unions, which acted as successors to the organisations of small craftsmen and journeymen of the manufactory period was responsible for their desire to preserve the former regimentation of production. Engels wrote in this context: "They aimed further to keep up the demand for labour by limiting the number of apprentices, and so to keep wages high."[1]

In the period under review there were also trade unions corresponding to the "transitional" forms of industrial development and affiliating workers with small businessmen, journeymen, master craftsmen for defence against the capitalist buyer-up (a similar situation existed in the United States' first labour unions). Such unions provided very slight protection for the interests of proletarian elements proper: the interests of the petty bourgeois were in the forefront. Individual labour unions even emphasised the peaceful and legal character of their actions, expressed their disapproval of "riots" and stressed the "common interests" of the consumers, employers and workers in their charters.

The first elements of a stable organisational structure appeared in friendly societies and to a still greater extent in the trade unions which grew out of them. The charter formulated in detail the rights and duties of a trade unionist, fixed the admission and regular fees, gave recommendations to new members, instituted fines to be imposed on scabs and other offenders against the charter, the procedure for electing union executives, the periodicity of assemblies, penalties for absenteeism, the structural divisions of the union, the rule of holding a strike (by a majority vote). Many unions introduced permanent membership cards (tickets). As is pointed out in one parliamentary report, by producing his ticket with an emblematic engraving of the union, the workman at once showed that he belonged to the society,[2] which entitled him to support from comrades of his trade and advice as to where it would be easier to find work. When moving to another place of residence the membership card allowed its holder to be automatically admitted to an analogous union in another district. The membership card of calico-printers entitled a journeyman travelling from place to place to collect fees from workers of a local union in any district. At first these fees were voluntary but later they were made obligatory (halfpenny in England and one penny in Scotland). In this way the trade unions took over, in

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 504.

[2] Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *The History of Trade Unionism*, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

effect, from the former journeymen's brotherhoods one of their functions—support for tramp workers.

To collect contributions to the common fund and give out money a box-steward was elected, i.e., a treasurer, who originally was the chief executive in the union (later the President and the Secretary began to be elected).

Usually trade unions, no matter what form they took at that time and what name they assumed, were organisations of a guild character and rather small; their activities were concentrated, as a rule, in some one locality; for a long time trade unions operated in isolation from one another. Gradually, in the process of the growth of the workers' class awareness, unions of one and the same trade operating in a given locality established at first occasional and then relatively permanent contacts among themselves with the object of implementing to their best advantage joint actions against the employers. For example, as far back as 1758, the box-stewards of eighteen individual unions had assembled during a strike of Manchester weavers (the participants in this meeting were subsequently arrested); in the seventies "delegates" from London's hatters' clubs assembled three times in the capital; in 1780 the clubs of Glasgow weavers took a joint stand in support of a uniform wage rate; in the nineties the unions of Manchester weavers delegated their representatives to attend monthly general assemblies; a similar routine was followed by Lancashire calico-printers, whose delegates got together even from different cities.

As early as the 18th century attempts were undertaken to set up wider-based societies of a professional character and establish stabler forms of organisation. In 1771 an Association of the Hatters was founded to unite the clubs of approximately ten cities; in 1775 it achieved a wage increase and compelled the employers to adopt a rule on the exclusive employment of club members. Later the Lancashire weavers began electing a committee of leaders of the local unions which was responsible for the fulfilment of agreements with the employers, but this association as yet had no formal organisation. Delegates from the West Riding clothiers societies constituted a central committee which, as stated in a document of that period, "meets, as occasion requires, at some place suitable to the local convenience of all parties".[1] In 1799 an association of Lancashire weavers was established, which affiliated fourteen local unions and had a membership of about 10,000. A committee of delegates from these unions met in Bolton. Thus, the early attempts to unify disconnected unions amounted, so to say, to a more developed (or widened) "system of delegates".

[1] Ibid., p. 40.

The formation of first trade unions in other countries followed a largely similar pattern, though not in every respect.

In *France* mutual aid (or loan and savings) societies sprang up in large numbers in the period of the Consulate and the Empire. They were also organised on the professional principle, affiliating workers only within the limits of one city (the societies of glove-makers of Grenoble in 1803, of the hatters of Lyons in 1804, of the Parisian hemp-carders and shoe-makers in 1804, of barbers in 1805, of stone-masons in 1806, of weavers, clothiers and millwrights in 1808—a total of over 100 mutual aid societies). These societies were the first roots of proletarian solidarity. Workers joining a society paid regular fees to its treasury and received cash loans in the event of sickness, mutilation, or unemployment. However narrow the framework of the activity of the loan and savings societies (which at times broke up quickly because of scarce finances), nevertheless, they served as a peculiar school of organisation for the workers, which taught them to contribute regularly a share of their earnings to the society's fund, to attend its meetings and to elect collectors of fees. With time, beginning with the Restoration epoch, the number of mutual security societies increased throughout the country along with the growth of the labour movement. Between 1815 and 1830 they were set up in the majority of trades. For example, there were forty-five mutual security societies in Paris in 1819, while towards 1823 their number had risen to 132 with a total membership of over 11,000; in 1826 the number of mutual security societies in the capital was 184 and they affiliated 17,000 persons. Simultaneously such organisations were set up in the provinces as well. This process became even more intensive in the years of the July monarchy: on the eve of the revolution of 1848 more than 2,000 mutual security societies operated in France under a variety of names (brotherhoods, philanthropic unions, etc.).

The leading trend in the development of trade associations in France was that from mainly charitable organisations they turned into *societies of resistance*, which used their funds not only and not so much for material aid to their most indigent members as primarily for aid to striking workers. Without renouncing their functions of mutual security such societies now regarded as their key task organising active, militant labour strikes. Societies of resistance formed at the end of the Restoration period (the Lyons society of silk-weavers in 1828) and became widespread in the period of the July monarchy (the societies of Parisian weavers and copper-smelters set up in 1832, of Nantes printshop workers, and Saint-Étienne braid-makers in 1833, to mention but a few).

Just as in Britain, in France it is sometimes difficult to draw a clearcut line of demarcation between mutual security and resistance

societies, so that this division is highly conventional. With regard to the mutual security societies the Le Chapelier law was not applied in effect, and at times the entrepreneurs themselves contributed a definite sum to their funds in the hope that the charitable activities of such societies would serve as a barrier to the active struggle of the workers for higher wages. The very conversion of some associations into others often took place imperceptibly, little by little. Some legal mutual security society intending to put up a determined resistance to the capitalists set up a secret reserve fund, which was spent to support the "resistance jobless", i.e., strikers.[1] In such cases the legal signboard of mutual security served only as a guise for the activities of the resistance society. However, illegal resistance societies were set up and operated here and there, fighting vigorously for better working and living conditions of the workers by organising strikes. These societies were of a local character.

In the early 19th century leadership of the strike struggles and material support for the strikers increasingly became the main sphere of the activity of labour associations in the *United States* as well. Here, in particular, picketing of workshops by "tramping committees" of the workers was practised on a wide scale.[2]

The *German* working class also traversed a long path from the mutual insurance funds (Unterstützungskassen) and temporary strike coalitions (Streikkoalitionen) to permanent professional organisations of struggle. The mutual insurance funds of artisan and factory workers, particularly in the thirties and forties, often acted as organisations for defence of the working people's interests against masters, factory owners and the authorities. According to the German historian E. Todt, in the period from 1801 to 1847 about seventy such funds were set up in different German cities.[3] Their funds were used to support the jobless and sometimes strikers (which was the case, for instance, during the strike of Hamburg cloth-weavers in 1835 and Berlin calico-printers in 1844).[4] The aforesaid strike coalitions served as the rudiments of trade unions to a still greater extent.

An important feature characteristic of the origination and early period of trade union activity was the fact that they formed in a situation of persecution by the ruling classes and agencies of their government, and lived through more or less prolonged periods of underground existence.

---

[1] Edouard Dolléans et Gérard Dehove, *Histoire du travail en France*, op. cit., p. 238-40.

[2] Philip S. Foner, *History...*, p. 74.

[3] Elisabeth Todt, Hans Radandt, op. cit., S. 61-64.

[4] See Herbert Warnke, *Überblick über die Geschichte der deutschen Gewerkschaftsbewegung*, Berlin, 1952, Tribüne, Verlag und Druckereien des FDGB, S. 10.

In *England* the trade unions throughout the 18th century were often persecuted on the basis of broad interpretation of the medieval laws on "conspiracies", and of individual parliamentary statutes referring to associations within specified trades.[1] In fact, dozens of workers' unions were illegal or semi-legal organisations already at that time. At the end of the century, however, the ruling circles took a fundamentally new step to suppress the intensified labour movement: in the period 1799-1800 the English parliament adopted laws directed against the trade unions in general. (Combination Acts.)

The Acts of 1799 and 1800 imposed a strict ban on the trade unions and strikes. Harsh penalties were instituted for founding and membership of a trade union, for agitation for a strike, and for holding it: imprisonment for up to three months or confinement to a reformatory; the funds of a trade union were subject to confiscation. Contrary to all standards of English law, one of the articles in the aforesaid Acts enjoined workers arraigned for trial to witness against themselves and their comrades. Legal trade union work in its active forms was in effect outlawed. Technically, it is true, the law forbade equally the workers and the entrepreneurs to form associations. In practice, however, through all the years of its operation no entrepreneur was put on trial and penalised. On the contrary, relying on these Draconian laws the entrepreneurs aided by the authorities persecuted strikers, organised the baiting of trade unions, primarily in the new industrial districts. The main efforts of the employers were directed to thwarting strikes. Thousands of workers and their leaders were thrown into prison by verdicts of justices of the peace.

The repression, however, failed to subdue the workers. The Acts banning coalitions aroused resentment within the masses. Under the direction of experienced trade union leaders the trade unions of Lancashire, Yorkshire and other areas opposed the enforcement of these laws. The protest movement was so powerful as to make the authorities suspect the existence of a dangerous revolutionary ("Jacobinic") conspiracy.

As a result of labour resistance, the anti-labour legislation could not be practically enforced in full: it was applied irregularly and not in all fields of industry. The entrepreneurs themselves often did not dare to resort to it, fearing intense labour indignation likely to be caused by harsh measures. Some traditional types of trade union activity, however, such as the box-clubs, the hospital insurance funds were allowed as legal; many trade unions, just as formerly, continued to function in the guise of legal associations of this type.

---

[1] In all, about forty such statutes were enacted. S. and B. Webb, op. cit., p. 683.

Nevertheless, a considerable proportion of trade unions was compelled to go underground and turn into clandestine organisations. Admission to them was now complicated by mystical ceremonies of initiation; the members of a union bound themselves by a most solemn oath to obey the orders of the brotherhood and the decisions of its majority under the penalty of being stabbed through the heart or, as the oath of the miners' union of Northern England read, "of having their bowels ripped up".[1] Meetings of illegal unions were held at night, at out-of-the-way hiding-places, and their decisions were a closely guarded secret. To the reprisals of the authorities and the employers the trade unions responded with terrorist tactics: for instance, the cotton-spinners' union set up in Glasgow in 1816, which was remarkable for its excellent organisation, even awarded prizes for the murder of strike-breakers and especially hated factory owners.

The period of illegal trade unionism lasted for a quarter-century (1799-1824). During these years, contrary to the hopes of the ruling classes, the trade union movement made great progress. Not only many old trade unions continued to function but quite a few new trade associations sprang up. The trade unions set up a network of secret trades clubs, issued membership tickets as before, and some of them took advantage of legal possibilities to deposit union funds in banks.[2] According to the Webbs, in a number of trades, for instance in London, the workers "have never been more completely organised... than between 1800 and 1820" (factory turners, cabinet-makers, and many others).[3] The secret unions concentrated on the strike struggles. The above-mentioned mass strikes of 1808, 1810, 1812, 1818, and a number of others were organised and financed precisely by the trade unions. For instance, the 1810 strike was conducted by a General Union of Spinners founded some time earlier[4]: the spinners' federation paid out 1,500 pounds sterling a week for several weeks in 1810, and the Glasgow weavers raised 3,000 pounds sterling to plead their case for a legal wage-list in 1812.[5]

In protest against the intensified exploitation of labour trade unions often presented petitions to parliament, demanding the institution of a minimum wage rate, a restriction on the number of apprentices, the repeal of the anti-labour laws. The illegal trade unions of London, Manchester, Glasgow, Sheffield, and Newcastle took an active part in the struggle against these laws. They set up

[1] Sidney and Beatrice Webb, op. cit., p. 90.
[2] E. P. Thompson, op. cit., p. 504.
[3] Sidney and Beatrice Webb, op. cit., p. 83.
[4] G. D. H. Cole, *Attempts at General Union. A Study in British Trade Union History 1818-1834*, London, MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1953, p. 7.
[5] H. A. Turner, op. cit., p. 84.

delegate bodies to conduct wide agitation among the workers to persuade them of the need to achieve the lifting of the ban on the trade unions at all costs.[1] Secret trade unions were often headed by radical leaders, who organised the workers, kept up a correspondence, managed the union funds, consulted lawyers, compiled and presented petitions. The highest level of organisation was seen, as before, among the artisan workmen. Associations of factory workers hailing from different localities, who had no stable corporate traditions and, therefore, suffered from especially brutal exploitation (with women and children prevailing among them for that matter) were still relatively rare and short-lived.

Trade associations in other countries also had to conduct semi-legal and illegal activities for many decades. Characteristically, in the period from 1830 to 1847 alone, over 1,000 labour associations in France were subjected to judicial persecution for violations of the law on coalitions. In the German states in the first half of the 19th century (prior to 1847) about thirty laws, injunctions, regulations, etc., directed against labour associations were promulgated: they were subjected to police surveillance and forbidden to maintain interlocal ties with one another, etc.

By its stubborn struggle the working class achieved the repeal of severe anti-labour laws and won the right to organisation. However, the illegal existence of the trade unions for a more or less prolonged period of time could not but leave an imprint on their development; they had relatively few members, and affiliated only a small proportion of the proletarians, operated in isolation and within narrow territorial limits, and therefore were unable to achieve considerable successes. Having in mind the period of illegal trade unions in England, Engels pointed out that "the secrecy with which everything was conducted crippled their growth".[2] At the same time, operating underground, the labour and trade union movement gained valuable experience; the trade unions learned to combine legal and illegal methods of struggle, and to strengthen labour solidarity.

The practical requirements more and more dictated the need to overcome the closed craft narrowness and local disunity of the trade unions. Little by little, both the objective—socio-economic—and the subjective—socio-psychological and ideological—prerequisites for this were taking shape. The formation of the national markets, the growth of the means of communication created by large-scale industry facilitated the development of ties between workers of different localities. "It was just this contact," Marx and Engels wrote, "that was needed to centralise the numerous local struggles, all of the

[1] Allen Hutt, *British Trade Unionism. A Short History*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd., 1952, p. 10.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 504.

same character, into one national struggle between classes."[1] At the same time, the working class was learning from its own experience that a dispersion of forces had a disastrous effect on the effectiveness of its resistance to the bourgeoisie. Gradually, along with the heightening of the level of the proletariat's class self-awareness, its formerly locally dispersed and numerically small organisations began to unite, and systematic efforts were undertaken to organise co-ordination of actions between them and to set up organisations of a more comprehensive type.

This process developed simultaneously in two directions, which may conventionally be described as "vertical" and "horizontal". Contacts between craft unions of the same trade became more frequent and on this basis at first local associations of a federative type and later, in individual cases, large national unions of workers of a given trade began to form. For instance, in England in 1810 the spinners of many cities of Lancashire, as mentioned above, set up their own organisation (A General Union of Spinners). Similar associations were founded by tanners, wool-carders, and workers of some other trades. The calico-printers, the iron-founders and the paper-makers in that period united already on the *national* scale: the first national trade unions came on the scene.[2]

On the other hand, a tendency arose towards the establishment of permanent bodies for co-operation between unions of *different* trades at local levels, various labour associations (in cities, regions, etc.). In England in the period of illegal trade unionism local committees of various labour associations were set up to compile joint petitions, to pay for legal counsel in law-suits, etc.[3] At the same time, attempts were made to secure closer unity between local craft unions of different trades. During strikes different unions supported each other financially. The following fact, at any rate, is characteristic: as evidenced by an official report sent in March 1823 to the Deputy Secretary of the Interior, it appeared from "various books and papers ... taken possession of by the constables" from the cotton-spinners' union in Bolton contributions in money had been sent to the strikers, besides their colleagues from 28 Lancashire cities (all of which are listed in this police report), also by the paper-makers, the coal-miners, the calico-printers, the pin-makers, the bleachers, the cabinet-makers, the mechanics, the journeymen tailors, the foundrymen, etc., from different places.[4]

The search for forms of organising workmen affiliated with different

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 493.
[2] Allen Hutt, *British Trade Unionism. A Short History*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd., 1952, p. 10.
[3] Sidney and Beatrice Webb, op. cit., p. 91 and the following.
[4] A. Aspinall, *The Early English Trade Unions*, op. cit., pp. 371-72.

unions was carried on with increasing persistence. In the last days of the 1818 strike, delegates from several unions, mostly of the cotton industry, assembled in Manchester on the spinners' initiative and resolved to set up a Union of All Trades called the Philanthropic Society for the purpose of disguise. As evidenced by the resolution of the meeting it included, besides the textile workers, miners, builders, shoe-makers, blacksmiths, mechanics, and many other trades. The aim of the society was to conduct co-ordinated strikes. Delegates from the member unions were to meet regularly "on the second Monday in every month". Every trade was recommended to "raise a fund amongst themselves for the general benefit" and resistance to the oppression of the "avaricious employers".[1] The society published the *Gorgon* magazine. This union proved superficial and unstable and soon ceased to exist: the closed shop traditions were as yet too strong at the time.

Nevertheless, the general upsurge of the labour and trade union movement compelled the ruling classes of the country to make concessions to the workers. In 1824 parliament abrogated the anti-labour laws of 1799-1800. The activity of the trade unions was formally allowed. This was a great victory for the English proletariat. It became easier for the workers to unite in trade unions when they had been legalised. True, their functioning was still restricted in many respects. In particular, the trade unions had no right of a juridical person, could not sue and be sued in courts of law, conclude any contracts or agreements. Nevertheless, beginning with 1824-1825 the trade union movement began to spread rapidly. New local and national unions were set up, such as the Steam Engine Makers' Society (1824) and the General Union of Carpenters and Joiners (1827).[2] The wave of strikes which swept the country in the latter half of the twenties and the early thirties and was led by the trade unions affected, in addition to the handicrafts, large-scale capitalist industry in Lancashire (the strikes of cotton-spinners and miners in 1826), in Durham (the miners' strikes of 1831-1832 which were brutally suppressed by armed force) and other districts. In 1831 a labour revolt flared up in Wales in protest against a lockout declared by the industrialists with the object of dismissing all members of the joint organisation of miners and metal workers—the Union Club. After the suppression of the revolt the Union Club was banned, which compelled the local trade unions to set up a clandestine terrorist organisation. As was pointed out in the press at that time, "It is no longer a particular class of journeymen at some single point that

[1] A. Aspinall, *The Early English Trade Unions*, op. cit., pp. 272-73.

[2] G. D. H. Cole, *A Short History of the British Working Class Movement 1789-1925*, Vol. I, 1789-1848, London, George Allen and Unwin Limited & The Labour Publishing Company Limited, 1925, p. 91.

have been induced to commence a strike for an advance of wages, but almost the whole body of mechanics in the kingdom are combined in the general resolution to impose terms on their employers."[1]

After the repeal of the Act banning coalitions the gravitation towards the establishment of trade associations of a comprehensive character became still stronger. One attempt to this end was again undertaken in 1826 by Lancashire spinners: however, they failed to convene a trade union conference. In 1829 the first national organisation of cotton-spinners—the Grand General Union of Spinners—was founded under the direction of the experienced trade union leader John Doherty.[2] The plan of its founding had been drawn up at a congress of trade union delegates from the English, Scottish and Irish spinners on the Isle of Man in December 1829; it was contemplated to set up three independent executive bodies (for England, Scotland, and Ireland); later they were replaced by a joint executive committee of five members, three of whom represented the Manchester spinners. In 1830, after stubborn strikes in Ashton and Hyde, the National Association for the Protection of Labour was organised, again on the initiative of the spinners.[3] Its purpose was to co-ordinate the struggle against wage cuts. In addition to the textile workers, it affiliated miners, potters, mechanics, etc. The association incorporated 150 trade unions with a total membership of about 100,000, and its influence also extended to the Midlands and Yorkshire. Among the large organisations which joined it was the miners' trade union of Wales founded in 1831. However, this association also proved unstable: when the textile workers' unions refused to support the strikes in Middle England in 1832, it disintegrated.

In the *United States* the labour unions began to grow especially rapidly in 1833-1837. Their membership grew from 26,000 to 300,000. About 150 unions were founded (including unions in those trades which had earlier kept aloof from the labour union movement—the hand-loom weavers, the plasterers, etc., as well as women workers—tailors, workers of umbrella, book-binding, and shoe-making workshops and factory hands). At that time first local associations of labour unions were organised: the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations in Philadelphia (1827), which affiliated fifteen labour organisations in the city, analogous unions in New York, Baltimore, Boston, etc.[4] In 1836 there were thirteen territorial (city) intertrade union associations, among which the General Trades' Union of New York (1833) was especially remarkable for its

[1] *Sheffield Mercury*, October 8, 1825. Quoted from: A. L. Morton and G. Tate, *The British Labour Movement, 1770-1920. A History*, London, 1956, p. 47.
[2] G. D. H. Cole, *Attempts at General Union...*, op. cit., p. 16.
[3] Ibid., p. 30.
[4] Philip S. Foner, *History...*, op. cit., pp. 102, 107-08.

efficient organisation. It set up a permanent strike fund, established links with trade unions in other cities, and published the *Union* daily. In the United States attempts were also undertaken to unite labour unions on a nationwide scale: in 1834 the National Trades' Union was founded, which existed, however, for only three years.[1]

Later, analogous processes developed in other countries in one form or another. From the fifties, for example, congresses of labour organisations of Piedmont, Italy, were called periodically; in 1856 the Eight Hours' Labour League was founded in Melbourne, Australia, which resolved to form an association, as it said in a resolution, of "all trades, professions or occupations whatsoever".[2]

The trends towards unification in the trade union movement, however, assumed wider development in the subsequent period of the class battles of the proletariat.

* * *

The process of professional consolidation of the proletariat everywhere developed in similar forms, although at different times. The struggle of the workers was at first spontaneous, but gradually they came to resort to more organised actions: trade associations were set up. The forms and the very activity of the trade unions were of an elementary character in the initial period: the workers' associations were groping their way forward blindly, as it were, paving the road towards the organisation of the masses. No completed structure of these associations had yet taken shape. It was distinguished by a wide variety. The workers' unions themselves were small and unstable in that period. They affiliated mainly workers of a given trade in some one locality, the majority of the workers remaining unorganised. It was only occasionally that attempts were made to establish broader-based associations but at first such efforts failed. This was largely attributable to the absence of adequate experience among the workers and the force of habit, which made the worker regard his fellow as a possible rival claiming a place on the factory floor he held or hoped to get himself. The formation of large unions was hampered by severe anti-labour laws which drove trade unions underground for long periods. The working class had no theory which could illumine the path towards its ultimate goal. Nevertheless, the emergence of first labour associations was a long step forward in the development of the proletarian movement. This first step was soon followed up by other steps, which advanced the working class struggle to a new, higher stage.

[1] Ibid., pp. 112-14.

[2] *The Australian Labour Movement 1850-1907*. The Noel Ebbels Memorial Committee in Association with Australasian Book Society, Sidney, 1960, p. 66.

Chapter 4

THE FORERUNNERS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM. UTOPIAN SOCIALISM IN THE EARLIER HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE EARLY SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST UTOPIAS

In the early stage of its social being when the proletariat was just taking shape as a social class, the antagonist of the bourgeoisie, it had not yet a theory of its own. By virtue of the undeveloped struggle against capitalist oppression, short leisure time and inadequate education the workers, rank-and- file members of the mass movement, were still unable to realise their true position in society and the destinies of the social classes, to develop a coherent concept of a social system free from the exploitation of man by man, to see the historical prospects for their struggle. The mass of wage workers, yesterday's peasants and craftsmen, nevertheless, harboured vague hope for a coming social change, dreamt of a better future. These Utopian aspirations of a perfect society, which appeared simultaneously with capitalist exploitation, i.e., long before the victory of the bourgeois system, contributed to the formation of the social ideal of the wage labourers.

As far back as the Middle Ages, Utopian egalitarianism in religious garb became a predominantly peasant aspiration (much less often it reflected the aspirations of the guild craftsmen). The Utopian vision of the future conjured up by the peasant masses at that time produced a definite influence on the social utopianism of the humanists and enlighteners of the 16th-18th centuries. They repeatedly attempted to comprehend the laws governing social life, and, what was most important, to draw the outline of some ideal organisation of the human community free from its vices. However, the scholars, philosophers, statesmen and church dignitaries of the Renaissance and later of the Enlightenment (except, perhaps, Mesliere) failed to understand the revolutionary aspirations of the people. The ideas of Thomas More (1478-1535), the founder of Utopian socialism (T. More, *Utopia*), were based on profound secular criticism, devoid

of religious mysticism, of the society of his time. Although More paid close attention to the impact of nascent capitalism on the oppressed strata of the population, nevertheless, his humanitarian Utopia did not concur with utopias of the masses. This is also true of other humanists and Enlighteners of the 16th-18th centuries. They were full of reverence for the religious and other mainstays of society of their time (More died on the block as a faithful Catholic).

More's Utopia, for all the novelty of the social schemes he proposed, is keynoted by a desire to return to the immobile forms of traditional society. And yet, it advanced for the first time the idea of social equality and renunciation of private property: this idea was presented as a requirement of reason, free from the mystical integument in which it had appeared in the peasant-plebeian heretical movements of the 15th-16th centuries. The Utopian scheme constructed by Tommaso Campanella (T. Campanella, *The Sun City*) a century later was pervaded by a similar spirit.

In the 18th century, Utopian thought remained, as a rule, humanistic and metaphysical. The Utopians (except N. Linguet) made no analysis of the economic structure of society, and their views on social development lacked historical approach. At the same time, while remaining loyal to the concepts of the philosophical Enlightenment, the Utopians of that period, following in the steps of Jean Jacques Rousseau, levied criticism on inequality in social relations, including the feudal institutions.

Morelly, one of the most prominent 18th-century Utopians, who like Rousseau, regarded private property as the root cause of social evil, created the picture of a society without private property, inequality, and exploitation. In the Communist community he described in *Le code de la nature* (1755) work is the duty of all citizens. Like the majority of the Utopians in the 16th-18th centuries, Morelly did not identify the workers as a separate class or estate. In his ideal community, every worker combines in his person a peasant, an artisan and an official, and he works in each of the main fields in accordance with his abilities and strength in a definite age period.

Despite the extreme speculativeness of his scheme, Morelly has left a deep imprint on the history of Utopian socialism,[1] primarily because the Babouvists, the heralds of the aspirations of the early proletariat, were under his strong influence.

A special place among the 18th-century Utopians belongs to Jean Mesliere (1664-1729). The priest of a village parish in Champagne, he was thoroughly familiar with the peasants' needs and aspirations

[1] For greater detail see: V. P. Volgin, "The Communistic Theory of Morelly" in Morelly, *The Code of Nature, or the Genuine Spirit of Its Laws*, pp. 5-51 (in Russian); V. P. Volgin, *French Utopian Communism*, Moscow, 1960, pp. 34-38 (in Russian).

and deeply sympathised with them. A voluminous manuscript entitled *Le testament* remained after his death. Excerpts from it were published by Voltaire, and its complete edition came out as late as 1864. In this work Mesliere opposed private property and called for the establishment of a "just and reasonable" system of the human community. In his scheme a rural or urban commune is the primary cell of such an ideal order. All its members work in common and equally share food and clothes. Mesliere's vague communal communism reflected primarily the aspirations of the village poor.

In contrast to other Utopian works of French Enlighteners, *Le testament* carries an open call on the people to overthrow the power of the oppressors by an armed uprising in the name of social equality and common property. Mesliere borrowed his arguments primarily from religious writings, which he interpreted in his own way like it had been done by the ideologists of many peasant revolts of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern period.

The most important milestone in the development of Utopian socialism was the French bourgeois revolution of the 18th century.[1] Writers of the preceding period, whose thinking was influenced by the ideas of humanism and the Enlightenment, regarded their Utopias, in effect, as beautiful dreams or at most as wishful schemes rather than practical projects of remaking society. True, a number of revolutionary leaders also assimilated, along with the ideas of the Enlighteners, some views of the Utopian egalitarians (Morelly, in particular), but on the whole, up to the end of the 18th century, Utopias and actual popular movements, especially early proletarian actions, were by no means always connected. There were exceptions, however, for instance, the Utopian programmes of Thomas Münzer and Gerard Winstanley. As Engels put it, in Münzer's programme the rudiments of communist ideas for the first time expressed the aspirations of a definite social group, namely, the class which was a more or less developed predecessor of the present-day proletariat and advanced the demand for socialising property.[2]

The peasant revolts against the feudals in the early period of the French Revolution of the 18th century, as well as the plebeian movement in the cities brought to the forefront the social problem which the Utopians discussed in their writings. Now this question assumed practical dimensions. Instead of social equality demanded by the

[1] For more detail on Utopian socialism in that period see: A. P. Ioannisyan, *Communist Ideas in the Years of the Great French Revolution*, Moscow, 1966 (in Russian).

[2] See: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 413; Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976, pp. 116-17. Frederick Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1974, p. 20.

working masses the revolution gave them only political equality. Even the Jacobins were unable to overcome the contradiction between man's right to life they had proclaimed and the preservation of private property and private enterprise in the economy. The most indigent sections of the urban population were especially keenly aware of their own misery. Under the influence of the bitter class struggle already in the period of the Jacobin dictatorship, the proletariat emerged more distinctly, both politically and ideologically, as a specific social stratum, presenting its own demands, against the background of the general plebeian mass in the Third Estate. Soon after the fall of the Jacobins the programme of the demands of this stratum was put forward by Babeuf and his associates in the form of a system of views widely divergent from those of the official ideologists of the Third Estate.

Gracchus Babeuf (1760-1797), in contrast to Morelly, who had influenced him tremendously, believed that the tenor of life of primitive peoples could not be accepted as the ideal of the future social order; the communist system which would arise on the ruins of inequality would accord not with the primitive requirements but with natural law that should be won by the poor from the rich in a bitter struggle. All the activities of Babeuf and the Babouvists were based on the confidence that the French Revolution was a prelude to another, truly great and final revolution. In their works the notions of class and class struggle are absent; they do not set apart the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as distinct antagonistic social groups, and yet their arguments are full of historical realism and revolutionary spirit. In contrast to Rousseau and other Enlighteners, who were motivated by purely moral criteria, Babeuf showed a lively interest in the conditions of life of manual workers, appealed to their interests, hated feudal property and demanded its abolition.[1]

The plan of the armed uprising drawn up by the Directory of the Babouvists provided for a number of such measures to meet the needs of the purest population that would help consolidate Provisional revolutionary government (free distribution of food, resettlement in houses confiscated from enemies of the revolution, etc.). This government—a revolutionary dictatorship of the most experienced and dedicated leader—was called upon to prepare a transition to a system of social ownership. The able-bodied citizens of the Babouvist republic invested with full rights would be provided with everything necessary for "average income" on the principles of strict equality. All of them would be obliged to work in various fields recognised as useful to society. Commerce and the arts were to be excluded from

[1] See V. M. Dalin, *Gracchus Babeuf of the Eve of and During the Great French Revolution*, Moscow, 1963, pp. 102, 103-109, etc. (in Russian).

the range of useful pursuits. Private property would be preserved, but the right of succession would be abolished and, therefore, in one generation all property would pass into the hands of the republic.

Coercion was a precondition for the establishment of the new system already in the earlier schemes of the Utopians (for example, war in More's *Utopia*). From the time of the French bourgeois revolution of the late 18th century a forcible takeover of power, thoroughly prepared underground, was proclaimed indispensable first for ushering in a transition period, when an effective system of suppression of hostile elements would be in operation, and later for establishing a communist system with common welfare and work. The communism of Babeuf and his most prominent associate Philippo Buonarroti (1761-1837)[1], as it was formulated in the programme of the Conspiration des Egaux (1795) was a communism of egalitarian distribution. At the same time, this communist doctrine advanced a most important idea—that a political revolution should be supplemented with a social revolution; only in that event would the working people realise their aspirations.

ENGLISH UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

THE FORERUNNERS OF OWEN

The example of Babouvism shows what powerful impulse the 1789 French bourgeois revolution gave to socialist thought. The Industrial Revolution was another crucial factor in the development of socialist ideas. The restructuring of social relations and the misfortunes of the working masses generated by the Industrial Revolution, above all in England, created a nutrient medium for the proliferation of radical democratic ideology in the latter half of the 18th century. This ideology was promoted by democratic societies (for instance, the London Corresponding Society), in the process of struggle for the election of parliamentary candidates expressing the aspirations of the working people. The democratic societies enthusiastically supported the ideas of the French revolution. In their declarations the leaders of the English "Jacobins", John Thelwall and Thomas Spence (1750-1814), defended the interests of the people, implying the craftsmen and the peasants. Spence demanded the abolition of landlordism, the handover of all land to communities, followed by the allotment of plots of land for individual hereditary lease, and called on the people to rise in arms to achieve these goals.

Charles Hall (1745-1825) in his analysis of the economic and social relations of nascent capitalism stated that with the development of civilisation the growth of the wealth and power of some

[1] See the exposition of the Babouvist doctrine in the book by P. Buonarroti, *Conspiracy in the Name of Equality*, Vol. I-II, Moscow, 1963.

caused an increase in the poverty and subjugation of others. Hall applied the term "poor class" to those who lived by selling their labour power, i.e., the proletarians, and the "rich class" to those who bought this labour power—the capitalists and the landlords. Hall wrote that in the relations between classes there was not even legal equality: the law and property were on the side of the rich. Despite his philanthropic attitude to the poor class and his limited practical demands (a reform of the inheritance right and a ban on the manufacture of luxury articles), in his works Hall made a considerable step forward in revealing the opposition of the interests of the antagonistic social classes.

William Godwin (1756-1836), a prominent English Utopian, believed that man has no congenital merits or vices, but only a certain propensity for justice and virtue. This propensity is not developed, nor expressed, in a society based on the principle of private property. Moreover, this society cultivates in man base qualities, primarily because private property divides all into the poor and the rich and kills all abilities. The state, which protects property, is an inalienable part of the general system of evil. From this Godwin draws the conclusion that there is no need in the state and the law and order associated with it and providing for private property.

In his main work, *The Inquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793), Godwin sketched the picture of a new society. It is a conglomeration of small communities formed by voluntary association of producers. The means of production remain in individual ownership but the products produced within the community by the work of all its members are distributed according to their needs. For all its radicalism Godwin's system was devoid of anything like clear-cut communist traits: it provided neither for joint land cultivation, nor for public workshops, nor for socialisation of the means of production. At the same time, Godwin's system contained many elements of anarchy: the communities were independent of one another, labour remained unorganised, all affairs were decided within the communities by the command of reason. The remnants of statehood (popular assemblies, courts of law, even an army, should it be necessary to organise defence) were to be preserved until the complete triumph of reason.

Engels maintained that in some of its features Godwin's doctrine "borders on communism" but at the same time he is "...resolutely anti-*social*"[1] by virtue of the anarchic aspects of his political programme. The eminent Soviet scholar V. P. Volgin, who studied

[1] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, Bd. 27, s. 25.

Godwin's doctrine, regards him as the progenitor of individualistic anarchism.[1]

A number of Godwin's concepts (for instance, on labour as the sole source of any income, on harmony between the interests of the individual and those of society as a whole) and his attacks on bourgeois statehood greatly impressed the English radicals and socialists; Godwin's followers included the suffragette Mary Wollstonecraft (1797-1851), the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) (researchers view his poem *Queen Mab* as a poetical explication of Godwin's ideas), and others. Works of Godwin, Shelley and others provided extremely valuable material for the enlightenment of the workers. It was not accidental that Godwin's book quickly found its way into the working-class districts, and Shelley enjoyed invariable admiration and affection of the English proletarians.

The social aspirations of the emerging working class in that period found a distinctive reflection in various trends of English religious dissent. There was no such original phenomenon on the continent. As pointed out by Marx, the 17th-century English Revolution was dressed in biblical clothes, and the language and passions of the prophets of the Old Testament were assimilated by the leaders of the revolution, who read their own thoughts into biblical texts. The ideological traditions of the revolution solidified in literature later nourished not only bourgeois radicalism but also labour ideology.

These traditions easily combined with the legacy of English Reformation, typical of which was, in particular, intolerance of interference of the state in religious affairs and private life. All this contributed to the consolidation of various trends of non-conformist Protestantism among the less mature sections of the emerging proletariat. Dissident sects, which considered poverty a sign of special divine predilection and promised the believer salvation in the bosom of religion, became quite common in the midst of the workers. The Methodist sect was the most influential among them. It consisted of Christians of all denominations: from Roman Catholics to Quakers. The sole condition for admission to a sect was the applicant's desire to save his soul.

Methodism to a certain degree contributed to the growth of the self-awareness, if only in religious form, and organisation of the workers. The Methodist sect had among its members many miners and farm labourers in the counties of Durham, Norfolk, as well as in Western and South-Western England. Methodists actively participated in strikes: almost all prominent leaders of striking miners

[1] See V. P. Volgin, "The Social Ideas of Godwin", in W. Godwin, *On Property*, Moscow, 1958, p. 31 (in Russian).

and farm hands were members of the Methodist sect.[1] The influence of Methodism, especially strong during the Napoleonic Wars, continued until the 1850s. Methodists were to be found among the Luddites, the English Jacobins (i.e., revolutionary-minded members of democratic societies)[2] and the Chartists. At times public speakers and trade union organisers came from the midst of the sectarians. The participation of the workers left a visible imprint on the activities of religious communities. It modified their concepts and aspirations, awakened a feeling of mutual assistance and helped strengthen their solidarity. Even religious texts, from which the dissident workers borrowed their views, were often used to substantiate the class struggle. For instance, in 1801 Lancashire workers used a biblical text (from the book of the prophet Ezekiel) imbued with hatred of the rich oppressors as an oath on admission to their underground society.[3]

At the same time, the practices of labour action more and more clearly showed that sectarian ideology largely contradicted the working-class needs. Indeed, dedication to evangelical propositions led to the proliferation of conciliatory sentiments within the working class. In accordance with the Calvinist teaching of "secular vocation" Methodism proclaimed, for instance, that any work should be an act of virtue performed in anticipation of the coming salvation, that any work must necessarily be inspired with love of God, that the workers ought to bear their cross without complaining.

On the other hand, the mentality of the working class in its formative stage was influenced by radical and democratic ideas. As noted by the progressive British historian E. Thompson, "the towns, and even the villages, hummed with the energy of the autodidact".[4] Not infrequently, workers, farm labourers, craftsmen, clerks, shop-owners, having received a primary education in childhood, continued to study on their own or in groups, some read Voltaire and Gibbon, and even went as far as the works of Ricardo, learning the ABC of bourgeois political economy. In eating-houses, those of the workers who were illiterate could attend readings and discussions of letters from William Cobbet, the most talented representative of "old English Radicalism",[5] addressed to the working

[1] E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels. Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Manchester, 1959, pp. 134-40.

[2] For greater detail see: A. L. Morton and George Tate, *The British Labour Movement*, pp. 20-31.

[3] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London, 1963, p. 392.

[4] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London, 1963, p. 711.

[5] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, Vol. 12, p. 188.

people. As evidenced by a contemporary, his works could be found in almost every hovel of cotton workers of Lancashire, Scotland, and other areas.[1] Although the consciousness of the working class was as yet extremely heterogeneous it may be said that on the whole the emerging working class which had originally been a passive object of the influence of ideas and traditions coming from the outside, by assimilating, interpreting and refracting them through the prism of its own interests, thus began itself to take part in forming its class awareness.

This process developed in various ways. Active members of the Jacobin and Luddite movements were recruited mainly among the artisan workers and the skilled workmen of small workshops. The radical and, later, the socialist movement in England, almost until the mid-19th century, continued to rely mainly on the same contingents rather than on factory workers employed in large-scale capitalist industry.[2]

ROBERT OWEN'S SYSTEM

The socialist plans in their Utopian form were evolved, as a rule, not by the workers but by progressive thinkers belonging to other classes.

The great English Utopian socialist Robert Owen (1771-1858) was born into a craftsman's family, but became a businessman before he turned twenty. From 1800 to 1829 he managed a cotton-spinning mill in New Lanark, Scotland, and did much to improve the conditions of work and life for the workers. His speculation on the results of his activities led Owen to the idea of reforming society.

Owen evolved his Utopian system towards the 1820s. In the next decades it was developed and commented upon both by Owen himself and by his followers. Owen's concepts of human nature are the core of this system. Following the 18th-century French rationalists he presumed that man's character formed in the process of interaction of his natural organisation with the environment. In Owen's view, the decisive factor is the influence of the external conditions, the social environment, while individual efforts undertaken to form a character are of secondary importance: "Man ... never did, nor is it possible he ever can, form his own character."[3] No individual is responsible for his character and his system of views, and this is also true of entire social classes. From here, in particular, Owen

---

[1] Georg Weerth, *Sämtliche Werke*, Bd. 3, *Skizzen aus dem sozialen und politischen Leben der Briten*, Aufbau-Verlag, Berlin, 1957, S. 270.

[2] E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, Chapter II, London, 1969; E. P. Thompson, op. cit., pp. 192-93.

[3] Robert Owen, *A New View of Society and Other Writings*, London, J. M. Dent and Sons. Ltd., New York, E. P. Dutton and Co. Inc., 1927, pp. 44-45.

drew the conclusion that class antagonism, just like hatred, revenge in relations between individuals, is an irrational expression of emotions, for each class is the victim of its own ideology. Consequently, Owen concluded, it is not the class struggle but knowledge of the laws governing the formation of characters that can lead the workers to their emancipation. He considered his doctrine of the human character not only as the fundamental law of human nature but also as the greatest revelation opening the way towards a rational organisation of society. It was precisely from this doctrine that Owen proceeded in criticising the capitalist system, its economic and moral mainstays, as well as in his efforts to outline the contours of the future and even to translate its models into reality immediately. Indeed, if man's character and consciousness are formed by the environment, which is bourgeois society, this society is responsible for the sum total of evil accumulated during the long period of its existence: the exploitation of man by man, poverty, ignorance, the feelings of hatred and revenge, and various vices.

Studying the influence of the environment on man, Owen made an in-depth analysis of the economic relations of capitalism which had taken shape in England in connection with the Industrial Revolution and gave serious thought to the conditions in which national wealth was created. Owen's interest in these subjects was especially stimulated by the economic crisis of 1816-1819, which followed the years of economic growth caused by the wars with France. Another reason for Owen's interest in economic problems was the failures of his numerous appeals to the rich and the powers-that-be, as well as more and more frequent attempts to establish contact with the working class; they enhanced sympathetic interest in the position of this class. Pondering over measures that could abolish unemployment, Owen levied criticism on the fundamental attributes of the capitalist system: private property, the division of labour deforming man's natural aptitudes, avarice and profit chasing, competition and overproduction crises.[1] Owen's greatest contribution was his assessment of the historic significance of the advance of productive forces in the era of the Industrial Revolution. The growth of large-scale factory industry on the basis of machine technology, he asserted, had become the scourge of the working people, dooming them to unemployment. At the same time, Owen presumed that the material forces maturing within the bowels of society would eventually lead to social transformations. He included industrial and scientific progress as an essential component in his vision of the ideal society. Owen emphasised at the same time that

[1] Robert Owen, *Report to the County of Lanark of a Plan for Relieving Public Distress and Removing Discontent*, London, 1821.

the beneficial role of the machine relieving man would be brought into play only when economic progress was subordinated to a rationally understood goal—the happiness of mankind. The rapid growth of productive forces would provide everything necessary for a population of any size (the Malthusian fears were unfounded).

If, however, despite the spread of machine production in England of his time the masses suffered from poverty and privations, "then may it be predicated that the existing social system is worn out", Owen concluded.[1]

Thus, Owen closely approached the idea that historical development is linked with changes in the mode of production. This puts him ahead not only of the Utopians of the 16th-18th centuries but also of a number of Utopian socialists of his time and lends a certain degree of materialism to his views.

Owen's teaching on the character also lay at the basis of his concept of the future society and the ways of transition to it. Indeed, if man's character and, consequently, his ability to feel happy or unhappy are determined by external influences, then this character can be modified in the right direction by systematic and purposive efforts. Such efforts will bring the intended effect only when the individual is placed in the conditions of a society or at least a community based on genuine and rational principles corresponding to the nature of man.

In Owen's scheme communities are united in federations on a national and later on an international scale, and their network will cover the whole world within a few years. Simultaneously, one language, one general code of laws, and one system of administering them will become universally prevalent. The population of the globe will be cordially united as members of one family.[2]

The idea of creating such communities—islets of a "rational society"—led Owen to work out the principles of their organisation and functioning.

Each community, Owen presumed, should be based on the principles of collective work, common property, equal rights and duties of all its members. Since all people have common character traits, each community member must be supplied with everything necessary in accordance with his or her age, without which, Owen asserted, there can be neither justice, nor unity, nor virtue, nor lasting happiness. In Owen's view, the abolition of the estate and class differences consequent on people's departure from the

[1] Robert Owen, *The Book of the New Moral World*, Part Seven, London, 1844, p. 5.

[2] Robert Owen, *The Revolution of the Mind and Practice of the Human Race*, 1848; A. L. Morton, *The Life and Ideas of Robert Owen*, International Publishers, New York, 1969, pp. 174-78.

natural laws is indispensable for social equality.[1] He believed that it would be reasonable and natural to differentiate between members of society only according to the degree of assimilation of knowledge and experience by individuals, i.e., by age. Each age group would be given an assignment that would best correspond to the mental and physical abilities of its members, no exceptions being made for anyone and nobody being granted any privileges. All would work on an equal footing, "from king to pauper", the most arduous and filthy work being performed by machines. Under such a system the abilities and habits would be developed much faster than under the prevailing system. However, Owen underscored, the new differentiation of society would be useful only when applied everywhere, among all peoples. When social equality was consistently implemented, Owen maintained, all conflicts between the rich and the poor would come to an end, and the class struggle would cease. "...All of the human race shall be happy, or none", he proclaimed, visualising the universal motto for nations.[2]

The principle of equality also underlies the constitution of the community settlements expounded in Owen's work *The Book of New Moral World* (1836-1844).

As an impassioned opponent of private property Owen viewed it as a factor which preserved and intensified the moral degradation of all classes of society and was the cause of social hostility and wars among nations. Since private ownership was in principle inconsistent with justice and irrational in practice, it would not be allowed to exist in a rationally organised society.

Owen held a sharply negative attitude to the official Church and bourgeois matrimony. In his words, the Church preached a mendacious and demoralising doctrine claiming that the root cause of evil was in man rather than in his environment. His religious delusions made man "a weak, imbecile animal; a furious bigot and fanatic; or a miserable hypocrite."[3]

Owen himself was a pantheist to the end of his days and allowed for the possibility of a peculiar secular "rationalistic" religion as the supreme consecration of the future communist society. Private property, bourgeois matrimony, and religion were the evil "triad" that had made the whole world a scene of rivalry for the possession of wealth and power. To deliver man from the "triad"

---

[1] Robert Owen, *The Book of the New Moral World*, Part Six, p. 31.

[2] Robert Owen, *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race; or, The Coming Change from Irrationality to Rationality*, London, 1849, p. 77.

[3] Address Delivered at the City of London Tavern on Thursday, August 21st, and Published in the London Newspapers of August 22nd, 1817.—In: *A Supplementary Appendix to the First Volume of the Life of Robert Owen*, London, 1858, p. 115.

his good qualities endowed by nature must be cultivated from childhood.

The rationalism of Owen's concepts of a new society was also expressed in his ideas of the ways of effecting social transformations, the methods of transition to a rationally organised social system.

In his work *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race* (1849) he emphasised that the transition to a new society, "the change from the ignorant, repulsive, unorganised, and miserable present, to the enlightened, attractive, organised, and happy future, can never be effected by violence or through feelings of anger and ill-will to any portion of mankind."[1]

It was only through propaganda and explanation of basic truths that a great revolution could be effected—a revolution in the minds of men as the result of consistent education.

Owen also believed that a changeover to a new, rational social system should be concurrent and gradual; the governments of all countries should simultaneously renounce the principle of deception on which all of them rest and gradually change the present evil social order to a good one. This change cannot be effected by any one party or class or result from a conspiracy. It must be worked at once by all united government of the civilised world.

To achieve success in their reforms the governments should set up a new body—a committee or council of a certain number of "the most intelligent practical men they can find."[2]

The committee should engage primarily in the education of the new society's vanguard of properly selected workers. This group of worker volunteers would be placed in the position of army recruits for the period of training them as instructors of the younger generation. The committee would appoint competent executive personnel for industry, agriculture, the institutions in charge of education, etc. Next, it would form a civilian army of unemployed or partly employed workers who would agree voluntarily to work as producers of consumer goods and, in case of emergency, to defend the country against a foreign invasion. "A regular army shall be necessary" during a certain period, but it will be used exclusively outside national territory.[3]

The civilian army would also be obligated to help build new settlements. For this purpose, the governments would gradually buy up land from private owners and divide it into lots sufficient

---

[1] Robert Owen, *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race; or, The Coming Change from Irrationality to Rationality*, London, Effingham Wilson Publishers, 1849, p. VII.

[2] Robert Owen, op. cit., p. 71.

[3] Robert Owen, op. cit. London, 1849, p. 71.

to support all residents of the settlement who abide by the uniform regulations. Fertile land would be apportioned in lots of 1-2 acres for each man, woman and child (later, Owen supposed, modern methods of land cultivation would reduce this minimum by one half to two-thirds).

For many years Owen hoped to realise his plans quickly. He regarded his experiment in New Lanark, the only attempt ever made to govern society on the principles of goodness and truth, as he said, as proof of their feasibility. Travelling in England, France, Germany, the United States of America, and Mexico, he submitted numerous projects to governments. He referred to his experiment at New Lanark as eminently successful. "Let society be now based on the same principle, and all evil will soon disappear," he pleaded in his appeals.[1]

On his return to England, Owen again appealed to county councils, to Parliament, to influential and outstanding individuals, spoke before numerous audiences, wrote pamphlets and articles for newspapers. However, the more he elaborated on his ideas, the cooler was the attitude towards him from the bourgeois public who saw in his plans an encroachment on the mainstays of their state. In the words of Engels, Owen "knew what confronted him if he attacked these—outlawry, excommunication from official society, the loss of his whole social position";[2] however, he did not desist from his efforts.

In 1824 Owen made an attempt to implement practically what he had been advocating for a number of years. By that time organisation of agricultural colonies was more and more closely associated in his plans with the establishment of communist communities. Such was precisely the meaning of his experiment in New Harmony. Since nothing could persuade wealthy people to donate money for such an experiment, he went to America where he bought from a religious community the settlement of Harmony and a plot of land of 30,000 acres, in which he invested almost the whole of his fairly large fortune. About 800 new settlers responded to Owen's appeal, and in May 1825 New Harmony was founded. During the two years of its existence (for most of this period Owen lived in England) the community revised its charter several times, quarrels flared up among hostile factions and in the spring of 1827 New Harmony practically ceased to exist. In his autobiography Owen's son, Robert Dale Owen, ascribes the failure of the enterprise to his father's reluctance to screen the applicants in the hope of their moral re-

[1] Robert Owen, *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race* London, 1849, p. 3.

[2] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, 1975, p. 312.

formation within the community; it was vagabonds and adventurers who eroded New Harmony from within.[1] One more circumstance contributed to that: after the first successes of the colony Owen hastened to change over from remuneration according to work to the principle of equal remuneration for all. Under such conditions, of course, reformation could not have taken place and in fact it was never begun. Besides, there were many bourgeois intellectuals in the colony, who could not find common language with new settlers from among the workers.[2]

While Owen was carrying out his experiment, the English labour movement became more active. A number of socialists—William Thompson, John F. Bray, John Gray and Thomas Hodgskin—published works whose ideas were close to those being developed by Owen. Periodicals which expressed to a definite extent the interests of the working class appeared on the scene (for example, *The Poor Man's Guardian* founded in 1830).[3] Groups of Owen's followers formed in the midst of the workers. Conspicuous among them was the craftsman Abram Combe (1785-1827) of Edinburgh. In 1820 he visited New Lanark, and in the next year founded an Owenite club in his native town. Before long it had almost 500 members, all of them workers. There was a school for children under the club. The club members attempted to organise a co-operative settlement.[4] One evidence of the interest of the workers in Owenism was the activities of a group of London craftsman printers led by George Mudie and Henry Hetherington in the early twenties. They searched for a way of applying Owen's ideas in practice. However, it proved impossible to set up a co-operative settlement for financial reasons, so after long discussion members of the group opened co-operative book shops (profits from book sales were shared out as dividends). In 1826 there began to form co-operative societies, whose ultimate goal was to set up settlements in the spirit of Owen's ideas, as well as producer co-operatives to market goods made by artisan workers.[5]

In the process of its development practical Owenism diverged more and more from Owen's original doctrine. His appeals and works helped the workers to evolve their own views. On his return to England in 1829 Owen at first overlooked these small experiments, which he believed to hold out little hope. However, the failure of his own Utopian project in America and his ruin had the result that the views of Owen, who was as eager as ever to help the working

[1] R. D. Owen, *Threading My Way*, London, 1874, pp. 257-58.
[2] J. F. C. Harrison, *Robert Owen and Owenites in Britain and America*, London, 1969, p. 185.
[3] J. Godechot (ed.), *La presse ouvrière 1819-1850 en Angleterre*, Paris, 1966.
[4] J. F. C. Harrison, op. cit., p. 104.
[5] J. F. C. Harrison, op. cit., p. 197.

people, tended to become more realistic. He began to ponder over the opportunities for social change offered by the rapid growth of the working class.

The Owenites made their first appreciable practical contribution to the labour movement in the field of co-operative undertakings. Towards the time of Owen's return from America co-operative societies had encountered great difficulties in marketing their wares and resolved to apply Owen's idea of exchange bazaars in practice. It was based on his concept of iniquity of metal currency and the gold standard, which could be abolished, he thought, through the issue of paper banknotes guaranteed by the assets of the British Empire; then the intrinsic value of the precious metals would be greatly below iron and steel.[1] An exchange of labour products without the aid of money, Owen believed, could help remake society by reducing the sphere of operation of the vicious capitalist system. By improving the well-being of the workers and eliminating poverty and ignorance this exchange would lead to the triumph of the finest traits of human nature within their midst and prepare them for entry to a "new moral world". In practical terms the idea was that co-operators in all branches were to bring the articles they had made to the central Exchange or Bazaar where they could be credited with Labour Notes based on the estimated cost of the raw materials and the amount of time taken for their manufacture. In practice, the exchange bazaars set up between 1827 and 1832 were a failure. The only positive result of this unsuccessful venture might be the fact that the workers who attended the bazaars were indirectly drawn into the ranks of Owen's supporters.

While trying to make the exchange bazaars popular, Owen got in close touch with the rank-and-file trade unionists, who often made up the overwhelming majority of his audience; they avidly absorbed any idea that could help solve their vital problems. In his careful study of the organisation of the working class Owen noticed that the trade unions were small, organised on the craft principle and affiliated only craftsmen or workers of some one locality. Owen personally and through his followers enthusiastically supported the idea of founding a broad-based federation of workers of all trades and drew up for it a general programme of co-operation on the principles of equality.

In the late twenties and early thirties Owen and the Owenites enjoyed the greatest influence in London, Birmingham, Yorkshire and Lancashire, as well as at the earthen-ware factories of Stafford-

[1] Robert Owen, *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race*, London, 1849, p. 54.

shire. London's Owenite co-operators published the *Crisis* magazine, which was popular with the trade unions. The Birmingham Builders' Union was also under Owen's influence. Towards the summer of 1833 Owen had won support from the trade unionists of Yorkshire and Lancashire. At that time he had an idea to convert the trade unions into production corporations, which would take over management of the relevant industries. Gradually a network of such corporations would extend throughout the country, and the state would wither away as useless. In other words, the working masses organised in the trade unions would serve as the force that would make the first breach in the edifice of bourgeois law and order and achieve a transformation of the economic and social system.

The workers were intrigued by Owen's projects and sometimes supported them enthusiastically; however, they could not adopt them and give up their class positions. For them the trade unions were primarily an instrument of practical struggle to satisfy their daily needs. Meanwhile, Owen seemed to be unconcerned with this aspect of crucial importance in the activities of the trade unions. Therefore, an eventual conflict between him and the organised working masses was inevitable. It was only a matter of time and the form it would take. At first this contradiction did not come into the open, which was due exclusively to Owen's great personal prestige. What is more, trade union leaders regarded his participation in the movement as great moral support.

In the middle of the thirties Owen ceased his practical activities in the trade unions. Though still a viable ideological movement, Owenism withdrew from the struggle for the immediate interests of the working class and turned into a sect concentrating on propaganda. Nevertheless, in those years Owen advanced a number of fruitful ideas, which contributed to the enlightenment of the workers and their understanding of their social status. Noteworthy among them was the idea, later developed by William Thompson and John Bray, that labour was the source of national wealth and a measure of value and that under different conditions it could be turned from a scourge of the working people into a source of their well-being and happiness. Owen also revealed the positive effect of eliminating the antagonism between town and country, formulating thereby the idea subsequently adopted and elaborated by scientific socialism.[1]

The founders of scientific communism analysed various aspects of Owen's activities. For instance, in 1844 Engels described him as the forefather of English socialism standing aloof from the labour

[1] A. L. Morton, *The Life and Ideas of Robert Owen*, International Publishers, New York, 1969, p. 56.

movement.[1] A quarter-century later, however, in presenting a comprehensive assessment of Owen in *Anti-Dühring*, Engels emphasised primarily the positive historical significance of the activities of the great Utopian. "Every social movement, every real advance in England on behalf of the workers links itself on to the name of Robert Owen," he wrote.[2] Thus, in contrast to vulgar theoreticians like Dühring, who claimed the role of mentors of the working class and at the same time distorted or ignored the doctrine of the great Utopian, Engels deemed it necessary to emphasise Owen's contribution to the cause of the working class and socialism.

Owen lived in an epoch when the class battles were becoming increasingly bitter. However, violence was absolutely alien to his rationalistic views. To make man's character ideal, Owen reasoned, man himself must be made happy. This could be achieved only if man were placed in different conditions and given a new education in the spirit of reason and universal love. Violence could only cause harm, spoil rather than improve the mores, alienate people from each other, embitter them and make them unfit for collective communist life. Owen's metaphysical character of the thinking, that made him closer in this respect to the 18th-century Enlighteners than to the revolutionary thinkers of the 19th century, interfered with his realisation of the fact that the cause-and-effect relationships of man and his environment are dialectical: not only the environment shapes man but man himself modifies the environment. In social life the latter process is inconceivable without the class struggle, as is evidenced, in effect, by the whole history of society. The transition from one stage of social development to the next is performed not in consequence of mankind's spiritual perfection but under the impact of changes in the material conditions of its existence and in the corresponding social relations. For Owen, however, the class struggle was the result of the ignorance of the masses, and he presumed, therefore, that it could be removed from the scene only through Enlightenment. Owen wrote that the severe distress of the masses fully justified their desire to end class legislation. The masses, however, were as yet too ignorant to know what should substitute for it.

That concept was one of the causes responsible for the relatively weak influence of Owen's social doctrine on the workers, although his communist ideal attracted many of them. For all his sincere and selfless attempts to serve the labour cause, Owen failed to become an efficient practical leader of the workers. He wanted to teach and to educate, even though with sincere sympathy for the workers,

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 525.
[2] F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 312.

without realising, however, that towards the middle of the thirties their class self-awareness had risen to a point where they began to understand more and more clearly the need for a political struggle. Owen did not follow the workers, and the workers did not follow him. As was noted by G. V. Plekhanov, the front-ranking workers ignored Owen's appeals for a renunciation of the political struggle, although they adopted his co-operative and partly his communist ideas.[1] They borrowed from him what he by no means considered the most important part of his doctrine, not what he offered them himself but what met their own interests and served their own goals, what could lend them added strength in their struggle—confidence in the possibility of building a new society in the attractive form which Owen's Utopian thought had imparted to it.

FRENCH UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

THE UTOPIAN SYSTEM OF SAINT-SIMON

In the earlier half of the 19th century a host of Utopian schools sprang up in France. The reason for that was primarily the fact that the French bourgeois revolution of the late 18th century, having abolished the feudal system and secured the domination of the bourgeois order, failed to meet the social aspirations of the working people. As a result, the problem of a search for new ways of social development assumed greater acuity.

France entered the era of the industrial revolution later than other countries, and its labour movement was relatively underdeveloped. These circumstances were responsible for the fact that the luxuriant efflorescence of Utopian socialist ideas was originally associated only to a very slight degree with the growth of the class awareness of the proletariat. Unlike those in England they to a greater extent stemmed from the traditions of the Enlightenment rather than reflected the process of economic development proper. The great French Utopian thinker Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825) reflected in his activities these distinctions of the social evolution in France. A scion of an aristocratic family and a pupil of d'Alembert, one of the most eminent encyclopaedists, he assimilated the ideas of the philosophers of the Enlightenment in his childhood. At the age of 42, after a stormy life full of unrealised projects, Saint-Simon came forward with theoretical works.

Trying to comprehend the meaning of historical development and the fundamental laws of the past, Saint-Simon departed from the principles of natural law the 18th-century rationalists had relied

[1] G. V. Plekhanov, "Utopian Socialism in the Nineteenth Century", in *Selected Philosphical Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976, p. 548.

upon. In his works he presented a detailed description of the historical periods passed by mankind and the social strata generated by them, developing one of the major aspects of his doctrine—the theory of classes and class struggle. Already in his first work—*Lettre d'un habitant de Geneve* (1803)—he pointed out the existence of classes as subjects of history. Later Saint-Simon raised the question of the origin of classes and made a great contribution to the development of this problem.

Continuing the traditions of a number of representatives of French social thought, Saint-Simon studied the struggle between the oppressed, indigent sections of the population and the property owners in all main historical periods—the struggle between the slaves and the slave-owners, the plebeians and the patricians, the serfs and the feudals. Following Mablie, he arrived at the conclusion that the classes had formed as a result of conquest. He believed that the "industrial class" consisting mainly of urban craftsmen and merchants had taken shape as far back as the Middle Ages. This class is "more important than all others, because it can do without all other classes, while no other class can do without it, because it relies on its own resources and exists by its own work."[1]

Later, Saint-Simon turned his attention to the antagonisms within the "industrial class": he distinguished within it a small propertied class, on the one hand, and a large indigent class, on the other; the struggle between the property owners and the proletarians was inevitable, he stated. Saint-Simon justified the people's revolutionary actions in 1789-1794.[2] He saw the bad fortune of the revolution in the fact that its leadership had been seized by an intermediate class which had taken the place of the feudals. (Saint-Simon often called it the bourgeoisie). Therefore, the revolution had failed to establish a system corresponding to the interests of the "most numerous class", which meant that a new revolution was necessary for the public good. "It is our opinion," Saint-Simon wrote, "that this change should be *brusque* and achieved by direct measures."[3]

---

[1] *Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon*, Tome IV. Editions anthropos, Paris, 1966, p. 4. For greater detail concerning Saint-Simon's views on the ascent of the "industrial class" see: M. A. Alpatov. "The French Utopian Socialists and the Bourgeois Theory of Class Struggle in the 19th Century."—In: *A Look at the History of Socio-Political Ideas*, Moscow, 1955, pp. 385-412 (in Russian).

[2] H. Saint-Simon, "Lettres de H. Saint-Simon à un américain." In: *L'Industrie ou discussion politiques, morales et philosophiques, dans l'intérêt de tous les hommes livrés à des travaux utiles et indépendants.* Tome second, A Paris, au bureau de l'administration. 1817, pp. 55-59, 67.

[3] *Oeuvres choisies de C.-H. de Saint-Simon*, Tome III, Bruxelles, Fi. Van Meenen et C[ie], Imprimeurs, 1859, p. 288, 298.

The socialist motives in the Saint-Simon's ideas became more salient in the last years of his life, especially in such works as *Catéchisme des industriels* (1823-1824) and *Nouveau christianisme* (1825). By that time Saint-Simon had become convinced that the foundation of society was constituted not by the industrials but the proletariat—"the workers engaged in manual work".[1]

In that period Saint-Simon's chief objective in all his activity was "amelioration of the moral and physical existence of the poorest class; society must be so organised as to achieve this great goal in the best possible way."[2]

As was noted by Marx, in 1825 Saint-Simon "speaks directly for the working-class and declares their emancipation to be the goal of his efforts."[3]

Saint-Simon describes the future social system as an "industrial system". He visualises the transition to it more often in the form of peaceful evolution effected through persuasion, although sometimes he allows for the possibility of a brief acute confrontation between classes. The means of the transition are reforms, initially of partial character (removal from the scene of the hereditary nobility, redemption of the land from parasitic land-owners, i.e., those who do not engage in agriculture, improvements in the position of the peasants). But the main effort should be directed towards providing for the subsistence of the most numerous class, the proletariat (in the last years of his life Saint-Simon used this term more and more often). Proceeding from the principle that all must work, he also formulates the idea of the right to work; true, this idea is not fully developed in his writings.[4]

The system pictured by Saint-Simon was not socialist in the true sense of the word. Under this system economic anarchy inherent in capitalism would disappear, production would be carried on according to plan, but private property and profit would be preserved. Saint-Simon does not speak of socialisation of the means of production anywhere in his works. The state only subordinates the actions of the industrial class to a general plan. The concept that under such a social system it is possible to achieve the social emancipation of the workers was, of course, an illusion, but Saint-Simon's idea of an integrated planned economy on a national and on a world scale has become part and parcel of socialist thought.

---

[1] Ibid., p. 282.

[2] *Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon*, Tome III, *Du Système industriel. Nouveau christianisme*, Editions anthropos, Paris, 1966, p. 173.

[3] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 605.

[4] See V. P. Volgin, *Saint-Simon and Saint-Simonianism*. Moscow, 1961, p. 57 (in Russian).

Saint-Simon's system is contradictory in many respects. It was formed during a long period, and bears an imprint of repeated revisions. For instance, late in his life Saint-Simon sought to impart a religious colour to his doctrine; the adoption of "new Christianity" by the powers that be, he presumed, would help create such a spiritual atmosphere that would contribute to the birth of a new social system.

The ideological legacy of Saint-Simon has been the subject of heated debates to this day. Bourgeois scholars consider him a theoretician of organised capitalism. Some advocates of the notorious concept of "harmony between labour and capital" make frequent allusions to him. The preachers of the technocratic theory, like James Burnham, readily manipulate his views. For all the delusions of the great thinker, however, his social ideal is infinitely far from the goals of the apologists of monopoly capital.

Quite inaccurate is also the general assessment of Saint-Simon's doctrine and activities by the well-known Labour historian G. D. H. Cole, who overlooked the evolution of Saint-Simon's views. Cole alleged that Saint-Simon not only had no doctrine of class war, but that there was "no hint of any likely antagonism between capitalist and worker" in his writings, and he had never appealed to the working class so as to win it over to his side.[1]

Some contemporary Marxist scholars, lapsing into another extreme, reckon him among socialists without reservations. This conception oversimplifies the contradictions in the views of Saint-Simon which were characteristic of the late period of his life as well. It is indisputable that at that time the socialist tendencies, which were constantly in conflict with liberal tendencies in his doctrine, began to prevail. However, the conclusions from the socialist tendencies in Saint-Simon's doctrine were drawn by his followers after the death of their teacher. Saint-Simon himself, even in the last years of his activity when he came forward as a champion of the working class, did not formulate such demands as the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, their handover into the possession of the whole society, and the abolition of classes and of exploitation of man by man.

SAINT-SIMONIANISM

Saint-Simon's closest disciples and followers at first confined themselves to the dissemination of his doctrine and later began to develop its individual aspects. In the mid-twenties the Saint-

[1] G. D. H. Cole, *Socialist Thought. The Forerunners 1789-1850*, London, Macmillan & Co. Ltd. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1955, pp. 37, 43, 49, 50.

Simonian Pierre Leroux (1797-1871) became known for his wide activities. He gradually transformed the liberal *Le globe* magazine, which he edited, into a Socialist mouthpiece. The main group of Saint-Simonians, whose best-known members were Saint-Amand Bazard (1791-1832), Barthélemy-Prosper Enfantin (1796-1864) and Olinde Rodrigues (1794-1851), took positions substantially different from Leroux's views with their characteristic strong touch of mysticism. Their interpretation of their teacher's views was reflected in *Le producteur* magazine published by Rodrigues and in their joint work *Doctrine de Saint-Simon. Exposition.*

In contrast to Saint-Simon himself, this group of his followers gradually brought to the forefront the question of property, resolving it in a Socialist spirit: private property should be handed over to the state, which, in their view, would become "an association of workers".[1] Private property, the Saint-Simonians wrote, should be abolished, since it is directly linked with the exploitation of labour by capital. The very expression "exploitation of man by man", was first used in the *Doctrine de Saint-Simon.* In this work the proletariat and private property are the subject of a separate chapter (lecture) where both the bourgeois and the feudal property owners are opposed to the indigent worker.[2] That approach was a step forward from Saint-Simon's views. The subtitle of the lecture is interesting in itself: "Master, Slave.—Patrician, Plebeian.—Seigneur, Serf.—Idler, Worker." The proposition that the worker is genetically linked with other historically conditioned states of dependence and exploitation had been expressed by N. Linguet as far back as the 18th century.[3] The latter, however, considered the worker's position worse than that of a slave. The Saint-Simonians, on the other hand, spoke of a lessening of the exploitation of man by man due to the historical change in the forms of property.[4] The worker, who is the object of exploitation, they emphasised, is a direct descendant of the slave and the serf, but he is different from them in that he is no longer bound to the land. He is legally free but he can exist only on the terms dictated to him by the owners of the means of production. Therefore, the worker is exploited both materially, intellectually, and morally.

The Saint-Simonians imagined the ideal state of society—a world association—as the ultimate result of mankind's progressive development. It must be preceded by a series of transformations, of which the most important one is the abolition of the exploitation of man

[1] *Doctrine de Saint-Simon. Exposition*, Paris, 1924, p. 188.
[2] *Doctrine de Saint-Simon. Exposition*, Premiere année. 1829. Bruxelles, Louis Hauman et Compagnie, 1831, pp. 169-83.
[3] N. Linguet, *La theorie des loix civiles.* Tome 2, Paris, 1767, p. 462.
[4] *Doctrine de Saint-Simon*, p. 172-74.

by man. However, the Saint-Simonians visualised this act as something external in relation to the most exploited class, which remained a suffering object for them. "Now there can be only one overturn capable of inflaming the hearts and filling them with a feeling of eternal gratitude—this is an overturn that will finally put an end to all forms of that exploitation, which has become impious in its very essence."[1] And inasmuch as exploitation is based on property, the abolition of private property through the abolition of the inheritance right should be given priority among the practical means of creating a new system. This socialisation of property is to become its "final change" in the course of history. The right of ownership will be replaced by the right of labour and the right of ability. All shall work on the principle: "To each according to his ability, to each ability according to its deeds."[2] The inequality of remuneration will be a factor stimulating labour, and give free scope to the development of individual abilities. The Saint-Simonians emphasised the difference of their views from those of the advocates of consumer communism (Morelly, the Babouvists) with its levelling principle.

The Saint-Simonian school exerted an insignificant influence on the labour movement in France.[3] But its influence on the emerging socialist movement in other countries, particularly beyond the Rhine, was quite appreciable. In *The German Ideology* (1845-1846) Marx and Engels showed a profound and detailed knowledge of the works of Saint-Simon and the Saint-Simonian school and singled out what was new in the contributions of Bazard and other followers of Saint-Simon to the theory of society. Marx and Engels pointed out that the period 1825-1830—the time between the death of Saint-Simon and the July revolution—had been "a period which covers part of the most important theoretical development of Saint-Simonism". They gave special attention to the Saint-Simonians' approach to the problem of property.[4]

FOURIER'S UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

Francois Marie Charles Fourier (1772-1837), a younger contemporary of Saint-Simon, was born into the family of a textile shop-owner in the town of Besançon. A small merchant clerk all his life, he learned from his own experience the mechanism of bourgeois

[1] *Doctrine de Saint-Simon*, p. 175-76.
[2] Ibid., p. 28.
[3] Maurice Agulhon, *Une ville ouvrière au temps du socialisme utopique*, Paris—La Haye, Mouton, 1970.
[4] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 505, 508-09.

commerce, and devoted to its criticism the most vivid pages in his works.

Fourier evolved his Utopian system gradually, supplementing and modifying it as new facts of the economic, social, political and cultural life in France and other countries came to his notice. In 1808 Fourier published his first large work, *Theorie des quatre mouvements, et des destinées générales* expounding his teaching on the passions, the free development of which must, in his opinion, become the foundation of a new system. In the same work, he develops his idea of the phalanges—the basic cells of this system. In 1822 Fourier published the *Traite de l'association domestique et agricole* (later reprinted under the title *Théorie de l'Unité universelle*), which described in the minutest detail the activities of the phalange. In 1829 Fourier's most complete work, *Nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire*, on the same subject came off the press.

Fourier defined the capitalist system as "industrial anarchy" but like Saint-Simon he failed to understand its true causes. He saw them in the fragmentation of property, which obstructed a rise in production, as well as in social parasitism, by virtue of which the working people consumed little, while the parasitic strata of society consumed too much. Fourier levied especially scathing criticism on commerce: so many middleman parasites were engaged in it that the people, he said, received even less, while social polarisation was growing. The enormous power of the modern state supported this iniquitous system precisely because power was in the hands of the commercial and financial aristocracy.

Fourier indicates the existence of bitter antagonisms in the society of his time. Personal interests are in irreconcilable conflict with collective interests, the happiness of some is based on the misfortune of others. Members of different social estates hate one another and, alongside, their fellows of the same trade and social status.[1]

In Fourier's works there is no clear definition of the social classes, which he often described as castes. The number of classes under the modern system sometimes varies in his definition, reaching five (the poor, the straitened, the middle, the well-to-do, and the rich classes) and even as many as sixteen. With the progress of industry, the growth of social wealth, Fourier asserted, the antagonism between the two main classes—the poor and the rich—does not and cannot lessen, because "under civilisation, poverty is generated by abundance itself"[2] (this dialectical view of the problem held by the great Utopian was noted by Engels). The state of inter-

[1] *Oeuvres completes de Charles Fourier*, Tome sixième, *Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire*.... Editions anthropos, Paris, 1966, pp. 33-34.

[2] Ibid., p. 35.

necine war between classes may end only under a societary system which will secure harmony between the interests of individuals and the merger of classes.

Fourier believed that industrial progress could not lead society out of its impasse. In contrast to Owen he did not believe that the development of technology could substantially change the situation: "industrialism is ... the most recent of our scientific illusions"; "regions with the prevalence of industry are swarming with just as many if not more beggars than lands indifferent to this kind of progress".[1] Fourier sees the root cause of evil in that the overwhelming majority of people are not engaged in socially useful labour, or work unproductively. Among the social parasites Fourier lists the military, the officials, the domestic servants, and even farmers. ("Once I saw five children tending four cows and allowing them to eat wheatears".)[2]

The majority of women and children, half the industrialists, nine-tenths of the merchants, the jobless, and the criminals are not involved in productive work either.

Fourier's assessment of the significance of industrial progress and the position of the working people employed in industry and agriculture does not belong to the strong aspects of his criticism of capitalism ("the system of civilisation"). Nevertheless, he points out that the workers (Fourier includes in this term the working people both in town and country) are doomed to arduous, monotonous work, the fruits of which are denied to them. He writes of the "extreme poverty" of the French workers and also quotes press reports about the workers' misery in England, a country which is "the goal, model ... the object of jealousy" of other countries.[3] Fourier repeatedly witnessed the misery and hard toil of the working masses, in particular in Lyons, where he lived for many years, and where the antagonisms between labour and capital were strikingly manifest. Observing proletarianisation and capitalist concentration, Fourier presents a long list of privations of the French proletarian: he bears the burden of work but is deprived of hunting, fishing, and other rights; he undergoes all the hardships of service, compelled to engage in matters to which he is not accustomed and which make his boredom doubly worse; on arduous and dangerous jobs he develops diseases, in which case he finds himself in a hospital where he is kept in the same ward as dying patients; his son—his support—is drafted into the army; his wife and daughter are forced to become prostitutes; he is deprived of judicial protection, because no justice exists for the poor; the fruits of his labour go to his master but not to him.

[1] Ibid., pp. 39, 28.
[2] Ibid., p. 20.
[3] Ibid., pp. 30-31, 29.

For all that in the eyes of Fourier the worker remained only the object of exploitation. He failed to see in the working class the force of a future social revolution. It should be noted that although Fourier himself had suffered from the actions of the Convention in 1793, he was not unconditionally opposed to revolution, presuming that at certain stages of mankind's development it is legitimate and inevitable. Analysing the results of the French Revolution of the late 18th century, he spoke of the inevitability of new cataclysms ("the present lull is just an interval in revolution, a moment's rest of Vesuvius"[1]). In his words, the French Revolution was "a war of the poor against the rich". What is more, Fourier was often inclined to maintain that the future social changes would be revolutionary in character. In *Commerce*, a fragment published posthumously in 1845 Fourier wrote: "My purpose is not to improve the system of civilisation but to change it."[2] However, he usually rejected a violent revolution, accusing "politics" of failure to safeguard the state against revolutions.[3]

Observing the universal triumph of the "mercantile spirit", Fourier concluded that it was necessary to find such a form of social labour and life that would guarantee general well-being and happiness. In his view, this would be an association, the transition to which would take place peacefully. To the end of his life Fourier sought various ways out of the "system of civilisation", arbitrarily applying to his projects, one after another, the experience of Lyons producers' and consumers' associations, peasant co-operatives and communist communes. Doubtful sometimes of the possibility to achieve a "system of harmony" in one leap, he planned various organisations of "guarantism" and "sociantism", which would be steps towards such a system. Like Saint-Simon and Owen, Fourier attempted to implement his schemes by enlisting support from the people in power. As early as 1803 he had addressed Napoleon with a request to become "the hand of God" and help lead the human race out of social chaos. In the 'twenties Fourier hoped that his projects would be realised with the aid of those in a position to finance the organisation of first model communes. He even selected possible candidates for such creditors among Russian princes, English lords, French public figures and bankers. Until the end of his days Fourier waited for a messenger from the rich and powerful to bring him the good news of their willingness to supply money for the realisation of his projects.

---

[1] Ch. Fourier, "Égarement de la raison démontré par les ridicules des sciences incertaines" in *La Phalange*, Tome V, Paris, 1847, p. 404-05.

[2] *Oeuvres complètes de Ch. Fourier*, Tome I, Paris, 1846, p. 263.

[3] *Oeuvres complètes de Ch. Fourier*, Tome XII, Paris, 1968, p. 626.

In Fourier's scheme the basic cell of the system which will prepare society's transition to the higher phase of development ("the system of harmony") is the phalange, a producers' and consumers' community of 1,600 members. Such phalanges should eventually become widespread in all countries and on all continents. A phalange is organised on a voluntary basis and is not subject to government control. Its economy is based on agriculture, horticulture, livestock and poultry farming. Its products are consumed mainly within the community itself. Trade exchanges with the neighbouring communities should be reduced to a minimum. Members of the phalange are engaged in various kinds of manual work. To sustain a lively interest in it they must change their jobs in accordance with their own propensities and a general plan.

The phalange also has large-scale industry. As said above, unlike Owen and Saint-Simon, Fourier had no hopes for beneficial results of scientific and technological progress. The population of his communities lives in phalansteres—large common buildings—and works jointly. However, the members are given special awards for technical skills and organising abilities—an idea which was absent altogether from the strictly egalitarian systems of the early Utopians.

The idea of the phalange is based on Fourier's conviction that the basic human needs and desires can be brought into harmony if they are given freedom of expression, on the one hand, and are confined to the necessary formal limits, on the other. In contrast to Owen, Fourier thought it necessary to provide such a social environment that would correspond to the nature and character of the individual with all his passions, and thereby to obviate the need to modify his character with the aid of environment. In the first phase, the phase of "guarantism", work providing full subsistence, without need, will be guaranteed to everyone. The higher phase—"harmonism" will ensure full social freedom and voluntary happy work in the phalanges. At that stage community members will develop feelings of collectivist brotherhood and mutual assistance, the rudiments of which Fourier sees, for instance, in the selfless and courageous actions of miners rescuing their comrades from a flooded pit. It is on such an ethical and emotional basis that in Fourier's scheme work will be undertaken on an enormous scale to convert the Sahara into a fertile area, to build shipping canals connecting seas, etc. Work on a global scale will also be carried out to improve the soil and climate. The armies of the countries of the world, which formerly fought one another, will be transformed into "industrial armies" and sent to implement gigantic projects.

Fourier came forward with his social Utopia after Saint-Simon.

His writings, however, are devoid of any continuity from the latter but there is much similarity, even in detail, between Fourier's phalanges and Owen's communist communes. However, the two Utopians proposed different principles for organising their communities. Owen's colonies were based on common property, the moral principles of universal sympathy, the fraternity and equality of all citizens of the same age in their rights and duties, whereas in the phalanges the inequality of property status was preserved The difference in the social status and characters of the two thinkers prevented their collaboration, no points of contact between their doctrines were identified. True, Owen's disciple John Goodwyn Barmby, who had visited France and saw the activities of French Utopian socialists, in an article published in the journal *New Moral World* presented a circumstantial analysis of Fourier's system. For his part, Fourier sometimes also commented, condescendingly or even sympathetically, on Owen's activities. In the mid-twenties he sent Owen, who was at the time organising a communist colony in America, his *Treaties on the Domestic and Agricultural Association*. However, most of Fourier's comments on Owen were unfriendly. He believed that the latter was discrediting the idea of association and railed against "this monastic regime of common benefits".[1]

Fourier criticised "Owen's sect" for its principle of common property, for placing the entire income, except profits on shares, at the disposal of the colonists; all this ran counter to the principle of distribution in the phalange—proportionately to capital, labour, and talent.[2]

Despite the extremely bizarre, at places even fantastic appearance of Fourier's doctrine, the goal he formulated reflected the requirements of social development; individual traits of the future system which he opposed to the patterns of actual bourgeois reality clearly outlined the contours of an antithesis to capitalism. Therefore, Fourier's Utopianism consisted primarily in his failure to see the real ways of building a future society, the historical forces that could bring about the social change, and his fruitless appeals to the propertied classes.

FOURIERISM

The arrival of the proletariat on the scene of socio-political struggle gave a new impulse to socialist thought. The year 1840 was an especially conspicuous landmark. The economic crisis, strikes which involved almost all groups of Parisian workers, the threat of a general strike—all this riveted the attention of bourgeois so-

[1] *Oeuvres complètes de Charles Fourier*, Tome VI, Paris, 1966, pp. 4, 240, 242.
[2] Ibid., pp. 154, 166.

ciety on the labour problem. In the press the labour movement was identified with a rebellion and its members were described as barbarians and savages, who in their attempts to break out of their social isolation might bring about an overturn similar to the barbarian conquests in the decline of antiquity. Perhaps none of the social Utopians in France (who appeared in especially large numbers in that period) ignored the labour problem. Even such a mystically inclined thinkers as Félicité Robert de Lamennais (1782-1854) was persecuted by the authorities for his defence of the strikers. The prominent public leader Flora Tristan in 1843 came forward with the idea of a "labour union" affiliating all wage labourers in France and serving as the basis for a struggle for social reforms. Fourier's followers, however, kept aloof from these important trends.

The Fourierist "societary" school formed in Fourier's lifetime, in the 1830s. After Saint-Simonianism had lost its former significance in the mid-thirties because of dissent within its midst the Fourierist school became the major socialist organisation in France with a large number of activists affiliated in groups and with its own press organs. Members of the petty-bourgeois classes, and professionals—lawyers, physicians, engineers, and architects—prevailed among the Fourierists. Some authors, for instance, George Sand and Eugène Sue also took an interest in Fourier's doctrine. Workers among the Fourierists were an exception.[1]

In Fourier's lifetime his disciples engaged in propaganda of his doctrine, waiting for a wealthy benefactor who would donate money for organising the first phalanstere. After the death of the great Utopian the Fourierists advanced to the foreground the weakest aspects of his system and made an attempt to convert Fourierism into a reformist doctrine. They rejected the principle of the historical initiative of the proletariat, categorically opposed revolution, calling for "holding firmly the phalansterian banner and opposing it clearly and with determination to any revolutionary, violent and anti-property socialism."[2] The Fourierists did not seek to draw workers into their movement and disapproved of any attempt to this effect in the belief that Fourierism had "nothing to expect from the poor and ignorant classes".[3]

Nevertheless, Fourier's ideas after 1832 found their way into the midst of the proletariat, and also into the revolutionary and democratic press and some secret societies, which were under a strong influence of romanticism, a movement which affected not only literature but also the sphere of social ideas and social prac-

[1] F. Armand, *Les fouriéristes et les luttes révolutionaires de 1848 à 1851*, Paris, 1948, p. 15.

[2] *Bulletin phalansterien*, 17. IX. 1848, p. 97.

[3] *La Phalange*, 2-me series, t. II, Paris, 1839, p. 632.

tice. Before long propaganda of the peaceful means of struggle for social progress became the main activity of the societary school. The last Fourierist journal founded in 1843 even bore the name *La démocratie pacifique*. The Fourierists ceased to be indifferent to politics but recognised only reformist activity. Although they did not remain indifferent to the appalling poverty of the masses, they believed that state power which stood, in their opinion, above classes would iron out contradictions and reconcile the antagonistic interests.

These ideas were expounded in the most comprehensive form in *Principes du socialisme* (1843) by Victor Considerant, the most prominent Fourierist of the thirties and forties. The revolution of 1789, he wrote, had established political democracy but had also created the conditions for new, economic feudalism which enslaved the people. Therefore, it was necessary to continue the revolutionary cause on the economic and social plane. The economic system should be so organised as to guarantee rights to those who were denied them without infringing on the existing rights. This goal, Considerant presumed, could not be achieved either by the old conservative parties, or the Republicans, or the Socialists who were in favour of disorder and social war. It was necessary to found a new party of members of different classes inspired by the idea of establishing a government that would not support the domination of one class of citizens by another.[1]

Small wonder, therefore, that the Fourierists welcomed the coming to power of Louis-Philippe. For the same reason they assumed a sharply negative attitude to the workers' uprisings in the thirties, which undermined, in their view, the social equilibrium. In the forties the Fourierists denounced the governments (especially the government of François Guizot), which had failed to justify their expectations and had completely been taken over by the reac tionaries. The Fourierist journal *La démocratie pacifique* was brought to trial for its criticism of the government. At the same time, the Fourierists, who denounced British colonialism, did not object to the colonial conquest of Algeria begun in 1830, since in their opinion the French army was performing a "civilising mission".

The ideas of Considerant and other Fourierists of the thirties and forties were not merely a repetition of Fourier's views cleared of phantasies and extreme Utopianism. Unlike their teacher, the Fourierists engaged in politics but they saw its meaning only in reformism within the framework of the bourgeois system. In his book *Exposition abrégée du système phalanstérien de Fourier* Con-

[1] V. Considerant, *Principes du socialisme. Manifeste de la démocratie au XIX siècle*, Paris, 1847.

siderant wrote that the state should guarantee the "right to work," this primary social right of the individual, which ensures and incorporates all other rights.... Those individuals and classes who possess nothing—neither capital nor implements of labour ... are inevitably reduced under any political system to the level of dependence and helotry, which is sometimes called slavery, sometimes serfdom and at other times the proletariat."[1]

The first issue of the journal *La démocratie pacifique* which came out in August 1843 contained the "Political and Social Manifesto of Peaceful Democracy" written by Considerant. It was a code of the main principles of Fourierism and, to a considerable extent, of other French socialist doctrines. The 18th-century revolution, Considerant pointed out, had been followed by bourgeois competition, which resulted in the monopoly of big capital. Large-scale industry was gradually building up pressure on medium-sized and small industry, while large-scale commerce was ousting middle and small trade, and the concentration of wealth increased. All this led to a new "industrial and financial feudalism", while the masses were left at the mercy of the "propertied corporation".[2]

To the proletarians competition means depreciation of labour, a reduction in wages, the growth of pauperism. This gives rise to labour unrest and demands for the right to work, which is just as sacred as the property rights. Inasmuch as the propertied classes and the government undertake no reforms, developments tend towards a revolution. To avoid it, a serious recognition of the right to work and organisation of production on the basis of a tripartite association of capital, labour and talent are necessary.[3] In his assessment of the political parties Considerant singled out the faction defending the existing order—"democratie immobiliste", the faction defending the people—"democratie retrograde", and "democratie progressiste" (to which he also attributed himself) which defended all strata of society. Considerant deemed it necessary to dissociate himself from the Communists.[4]

Despite a certain similarity in the structure of the *Manifesto* by Considerant and the *Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels, these documents are based on the opposite approaches to the problem of classes and class struggle. To Considerant the proletarian stands at the bottom of the social ladder; he is disfranchised and downtrodden like a helot or a slave, and hence cannot be expected to display any historical initiative. This alone shows the utter un-

[1] V. Considerant, *Exposition abrégée du système phalansterien de Fourier*, Paris, 1845, p. 90, 93.
[2] *La démocratie pacifique*, Tome I, 1843, pp. 1-2.
[3] Ibid., p. 3.
[4] Ibid., pp. 5, 7-8.

tenability of the allegations of some bourgeois authors that Marx and Engels "borrowed" Considerant's views on the proletariat.

The centuries-long suffering of the masses, Considerant writes, has reached the level of a catastrophe. "We are living in an epoch when wars, political commotions, the insane strife and terrible privations ... have all intertwined closely and reached a degree of terrifying intensity. What is more, the awareness of social misery is developed today more than ever before: the pain is more excruciating, evil is haughtier and the pressing need for remedy is felt everywhere."[1] The mood of Considerant and the Fourierists of the thirties and forties bordered on an apocalyptical expectation of a social catastrophe.

The epigonous Fourierism of the later periods preserved outwardly its doctrinaire faithfulness to the teacher, but it borrowed from his legacy only its weaker aspects. At the same time, this legacy was deformed, because the main idea in Fourier's doctrine is the complete reformation of the conditions of man's life, while its reformism is not an aim in itself. This accounts for the fundamental difference between Fourier and his epigoni.

DISSEMINATION OF IDEAS OF UTOPIAN SOCIALISM IN RUSSIA

The earliest information on the acquaintance of Russians with Western Utopian socialism dates back to the 1810s-1820s. In 1816 the Decembrist Mikhail Lunin met Saint-Simon in Paris; about 1824 Pavel Pestel, possibly, read Fourier's writings. From the thirties the infiltration of Fourier's ideas widened. He was mentioned in the press. The ideas of Utopian socialism came to Russia through French periodicals, and were set out in camouflaged form on the pages of journals (*Otechestvennye Zapiski*, etc.).

The growing interest in Utopian socialism was directly attributable to the disillusionment of young progressives with the ideology of West European bourgeois liberalism.[2] A group of propagandists of Utopian socialism in Russia first formed among Moscow University students in the thirties, and A. I. Herzen and N. P. Ogarev became the first champions of socialist ideas in Russia.[3]

The socialist system originally adopted by Herzen and Ogarev was Saint-Simonianism (though, they did not discriminate, as a

---

[1] V. Considerant, *La destinée sociale*, Tome I, Paris, 1834, p. 2.

[2] See A. I. Volodin, "The Origins of Socialist Thought in Russia", in *The History of Socialist Doctrines*, Part 2, Moscow, 1964, p. 324 (in Russian).

[3] See V. P. Volgin, *Socialism of Herzen*; A. I. Herzen, "On Socialism", *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1974, p. 11; cf. A. I. Volodin, op. cit., p. 358 (all in Russian).

rule, between Saint-Simon's doctrine and that of his followers). While appreciating highly the significance of the Saint-Simonian school, Herzen in the thirties showed the greatest interest in the philosophical, moral and even religious, rather than the socio-economic aspect of the doctrine. Later, Herzen compared Saint-Simonianism and Fourierism. In a letter to Ogarev in 1833 he called attention to Fourier's system and noted sympathetically that in this system "the aim justifies the oddities".[1] In another letter to Ogarev in the same year Herzen described "phalansterianism" as the apex of mankind's spiritual development.[2] Nevertheless, in Herzen's system of views Saint-Simonianism held a much larger place than Fourierism, mainly because its concept of the objective and natural historical development by stages made it possible to explain somehow the causes of the defeat of the Decembrists and to outline new ways of struggle.

As established by V. P. Volgin, the formation of Herzen's socialist views was also influenced by Proudhon, and also by the revolutionary ideas of French secret societies, which suggested to him the importance of ties between socialism and the masses. In his observation of life in Europe in the thirties and forties Herzen became convinced of the need for a social revolution and recognised as legitimate the broad interest in the ideas of transformation and a new organisation of labour. Herzen's socialism had not yet taken shape as a definite system of his own views. Before the revolution of 1848 he had only showed the rudiments of a synthesis of different systems of Utopian socialism (mainly Saint-Simonianism). Also at that time, in the mid-forties, Herzen began to form his ideas of the special role of the Slav peoples in social revolution, which in the fifties took the shape of "Russian socialism" reflecting the aspirations of the proletarianising Russian peasants, a teaching which, in Lenin's words, had "*not a grain* of socialism".[3] As for Herzen's attitude to the working masses in that period, it did not go beyond sympathy, compassion, and recognition of the right of the workers to protest against their plight. It was not before his departure for Western Europe in 1847 that Herzen became familiar with the concrete conditions of life and straggle of the workers.

Like Herzen, Ogarev embraced Saint-Simonianism as a new social doctrine superior to bourgeois liberalism. In a letter to Catcher in 1837 he wrote that a new social organisation should "preserve unabridged individual freedom against the background of the highest

[1] A. I. Herzen, *Complete Works and Letters*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1955, p. 115 (in Russian).
[2] Ibid., p. 126.
[3] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 27.

development of public institutions".[1] Judging by this fact and by other pronouncements of Ogarev, it is evident that he, like Herzen, advanced the problem of emancipation of the individual to the foreground. The emphasis on the moral-ethical motives made his views close to those of the Christian socialists. "Industry in society," he wrote, "is the same as the body for the soul. Yet the soul is the main thing."[2]

Ogarev attempted to realise his socialist ideals in practice. In the mid-forties he planned to set up a socialist colony, to settle among the people and work for their benefit, yet he failed to go farther than visionary schemes. Later, in the period 1847-1856, Ogarev founded a people's polytechnical school, whose graduates would have to implement a series of reforms, including the transfer of serf peasants to the status of hired hands and providing them with farms.[3] Objectively this was not socialism but attempts to carry out certain bourgeois reforms.

Of all the Utopian plans of social transformation Fourier's system became the most popular in Russia in the thirties and forties. Ogarev wrote in 1841 that the social problem discussed by Fourier was the main problem of the time.[4] In 1843 Herzen considered Fourier's main principles extremely profound and most fully revealing the problem of socialism, such on which "more than a phalange or a phalanstere could be built".[5] In 1844, reading Considerant's *Destinée sociale*, Herzen pointed out the forcefulness of the Fourierists' social criticism, the way they exposed the shady sides of commerce and industry. At the same time, Herzen was also attracted by Fourier's previsions, ideas of social education, relations of the sexes, the organisation of property.[6]

Neither Saint-Simonianism nor Fourierism left in Russia a school of social thought or a social movement. However, the main part of the doctrines of the Saint-Simonians and Fourier, their social philosophy, individual aspects of their Utopian ideas were adopted and interpreted in Russia in specific ways and applied to the Russian realities.

The most prominent of the Russian advocates of Fourier's ideas was M. V. Butashevich-Petrashevsky. He and the circle of his followers played an important part in the history of socialism in Russia. As was noted by Lenin in 1903, the socialist intelligentsia was

[1] Quoted from: E. L. Rudnitskaya, "The Socialist Ideals of N. P. Ogarev" in *The History of Socialist Doctrines*, Part 2, p. 374 (in Russian).
[2] Ibid., pp. 375-76.
[3] Ibid., p. 381.
[4] N. P. Ogarev, *Selected Socio-Political and Philosophical Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1956, p. 321 (in Russian).
[5] A. I. Herzen, op. cit., Vol. 3, Moscow, 1915, p. 97.
[6] See A. I. Herzen, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 119.

not a product of the 20th century, it went "back half a century, beginning with the Petrashevsky circle".[1] In Petrashevsky's interpretation, Fourierism became a weapon of political struggle against serfdom and the tzarist autocracy. Petrashevsky organised a number of groups of his followers. These groups did not represent a common organisation or a society with a definite programme. With regard to their ideology and class affiliation members of the Petrashevsky circle were a mixed group, but most of them, just as the Fourierists of Western Europe, advocated non-violent means of struggle. Only a few of them came out for revolutionary actions and even prepared for them.[2]

Petrashevsky's followers compared the socialist system to man's normal condition, that is, such that best corresponds to his nature.[3] This principle accorded with Fourier's "societary theory". Like Herzen and Ogarev in their young years they borrowed from Saint-Simon his idea of historical laws.[4] Though they sympathised with the struggle waged by the working class, the Petrashevskyites, naturally, in view of Russia's specific conditions, were unable to form a correct understanding of its historical role. The most far-sighted of them, however, (for instance, the economist V. A. Milyutin) viewed the class struggle as a legitimate phenomenon expressing the vital force of society.[5]

N. G. Chernyshevsky (1828-1889) in his ideological development went farther than Herzen and the Petrashevskyites. In the years of his study at St. Petersburg University his socio-political views were decisively influenced by the events in Europe, primarily the revolution of 1848. "I seem to belong to an extremist party, the ultras," he wrote in August 1848. A month later, reading about the French Revolution of the 18th century, he remarked: "I seem to feel I am a terrorist and a champion of a red republic," and soon he admitted that he had become a "determined partisan of the Socialists and Communists and the extreme Republicans."[6] Already in that early period Chernyshevsky gave close attention to the social problems, in relation to which the political problems were, in his opinion, of secondary importance. Having in mind the French bourgeois liberals, he wrote in his diary: "You, gentlemen, think it is

---

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 41-42.

[2] I. I. Zilberfarb, *The Social Philosophy of Charles Fourier and Its Place in the History of Socialist Thought in the Earlier Half of the 19th Century*, Moscow, 1964, pp. 356-57 (in Russian).

[3] *The Pocket Dictionary of Foreign Words*, Issue II, St. Petersburg, 1846, pp. 250-51 (in Russian).

[4] Ibid., pp. 312-14.

[5] Ibid., p. 440.

[6] N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1939, pp. 66, 105, 122 (in Russian).

a matter of having the word 'republic' while power is in your hands; actually, it is a matter of delivering the lower class from its slavery not merely in law but due to the necessity of things.... I don't like these gentlemen who ... do not destroy a social system under which nine-tenths of the people are slaves and proletarians...."[1]

At that time Chernyshevsky also thoroughly studied the works of Utopian socialists, of Fourier and Fourierists (their journal *La Phalange* in particular). He was attracted by Fourier's original way of thinking and criticism of the existing society, particularly commerce.[2] Chernyshevsky wrote about the Petrashevskyites, the Russian Fourierists: "As for me ... I would never have doubts about involvement in their society, and I would certainly have become involved in it in time."[3] He fully sympathised with the common folk and proclaimed the emancipation of the peasant serfs a vital necessity. Early in 1850 he pondered over the possibility of government by "the lowest and most numerous class—the peasants, day labourers, workers", and concluded: "Here is my way of thinking about Russia: impatient expectation of an impending revolution and a longing for it.... Peaceful, quiet development is impossible."[4] Chernyshevsky pointed out the tremendous role of revolution in the history of social progress and expressed his confidence that the Russian revolution was imminent. In the event of its breaking out he was ready to take an active part in it.[5]

Thus, when he graduated University in 1851 Chernyshevsky was a full-fledged revolutionary democrat and socialist.

His activity reached its heyday in a period when the foundations of scientific communism had already been laid. By virtue of the underdevelopment of social relations in Russia, Chernyshevsky was unable to work out a consistent materialistic approach to social phenomena and hence he failed either to single out the proletariat clearly as the principal subject of the historical process or to solve the problem of combining socialism with the working-class movement. He did not (nor could) become an ideologist of the proletariat or a leader of a purely proletarian movement. The socialist views of Chernyshevsky, which he had evolved as one of the editors of the journal *Sovremennik* (1854-1862) remained Utopian and in some of its main features close to Herzen's socialist views. Comparing Chernyshevsky with Herzen, however, Lenin emphasised that "Chernyshevsky was a far more consistent and militant democrat",

[1] Ibid., p. 110.
[2] Ibid., pp. 188-89, 195.
[3] Ibid., p. 274.
[4] Ibid., pp. 356-57.
[5] Ibid., p. 419.

his works "breathing the spirit of the class struggle".[1] Chernyshevsky recognised the theory of class struggle not only theoretically, but he also placed it at the basis of all his practical revolutionary literary work.

Great credit is due to Chernyshevsky for his theoretical presentation in Russia of the problem of capitalist development. In his *Notes to the Essays on Mill's Political Economy* (1861) he gave a profound critical analysis of bourgeois political economy, which was highly appreciated by Marx. Chernyshevsky came close to understanding the mechanism of the capitalist exploitation of labour. "Wages", he writes in his *Notes*, "are determined by a balance between demand and supply. The greater the number of job seekers, the lower the wages...."[2] At another place he notes: "...labour is not a product. It is but a productive force, and the source of a product."[3]

Chernyshevsky also showed the action of capitalist competition ("the principle of rivalry") and pointed out the dual character of industrial progress, which, on the one hand, brings new privations to the working people and, on the other hand, affords opportunities for the use of technology to benefit the people.[4]

From Chernyshevsky's point of view, the historical role of a class is rooted in "the very essence of its economic position."[5] The interests of the workers and the capitalists are antagonistic. "The interest of profit is antagonistic to the interest of wages."[6] The history of all civilised countries is evidence of the class struggle, an expression of this antagonism. The class struggle leads to revolutions, "the triumph of the estate deriving profit was each time inevitably followed by an overturn which dislodged this estate...."[7] Chernyshevsky saw a clear confirmation of this fact in the history of France in the thirties and forties.

He regarded conflicts between the exploiters and the exploited, between capital and labour as the most deep-seated motive factor in social development. He believed that a new epoch in history would be one of the independent advance of the popular masses, which had tendencies "akin to communism", towards "a cardinal overthrow of the existing economic order".[8] The events of June 1848 in France and the rise of Chartism in England were, in Chernyshevsky's view, the first battles in the "age-old struggle for social-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 246.
[2] N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. IX, Moscow, 1949, p. 421 (in Russian).
[3] Ibid., p. 596.
[4] Ibid., pp. 424, 631.
[5] Ibid., p. 515.
[6] Ibid., pp. 516, 870.
[7] Ibid., p. 516.
[8] Ibid., p. 348.

ism".[1] It was not for nothing, in his words, that after 1848 in Europe "all began to shudder at the thought of communists and socialists", which were sharply opposed to all other parties. These ideas showed one of Chernyshevsky's main distinctions from the great Utopians of the West, who envisaged only a peaceful path of development towards socialism and communism. Chernyshevsky himself highly appreciated the contribution of these socialists. But simultaneously he criticised them for their rejection of revolution, their sectarian isolation from the masses and their proneness to concentration on the emotional rather than economic relations. Their doctrines, he presumed, were too abstruse, based either on "psychological theory" (Fourier) or on "tirades about 'love' of some kind" (Saint-Simonians).[2]

In Chernyshevsky's view, socialism is not just a good wish, an ideal moral standard or a way of life issuing from the national-psychological and religious distinctions of a given people (like its presentation, for instance, in Slavophile Utopia). It is primarily an inevitable form of economic life associated with the need for "accurate estimation of the social forces and requirements". Under socialism society will reach a high level of industrial and cultural development. Work will become a pleasant pursuit satisfying a physiological need, while the individual will enjoy the maximum of opportunities for physical and spiritual development. Chernyshevsky depicts the future socialist society as a federation of production associations set up under the auspices of democratic states and maintaining economic ties with one another. Socialism, however, will not be the culmination of mankind's social progress. It will be followed by a still higher type of organisation—communism, which will be established at a time "far more distant" than socialism.[3]

Chernyshevsky, just as Herzen, linked the possibility of socialist development in Russia with the existence of the village communities in the country. However, this communal socialism is alien to any Slavophile or Messianic aspirations. To Chernyshevsky the community is simply an economically efficient cell making possible such movement towards socialism that can deliver Russia from suffering caused by capitalist development. For example, in his two articles published in *Sovremennik* in 1857 Chernyshevsky argued that community land ownership accorded with the interests of the entire society and the needs of efficient farming much more than any kind of private property in land, because only large farms are capable of a wide application of machinery.[4] "The economic movement in Western Europe has caused the suffering of the pro-

[1] Ibid., p. 833.
[2] Ibid., p. 829.
[3] Ibid., p. 831.
[4] Ibid., pp. 458, 837.

letariat," he wrote in the same year. "We have ... preserved an antidote for the disease associated with this movement in the West, and we would act very extravagantly if we decided to abandon it because of our aversion to patriarchal traditions."[1] At the same time, it is not the peasant commune by itself but the possibility of applying both in industry and agriculture the latest achievements of West European machine technology, Chernyshevsky emphasised, that will enable Russia, as well as other countries at a similar social level, to make a transition to socialism, bypassing the capitalist phase. Thus, in Chernyshevsky's words, the historical process right from the first stage will run to the last, without stopping at the middle stages.[2]

The reform of 1861 boosted the capitalist development of Russia, and the process of disintegration of the semi-feudal village community became inevitable and irreversible. Chernyshevsky, who was arrested in 1862 and spent more than twenty years in jail, at hard labour and in exile, was unable to make decisive amendments in his theory of socialism. The hopes he had reposed in village communities proved Utopian; however, even in its original form his theory was the first brilliant attempt to outline the ways of non-capitalist development, to bring civilisation within reach of the countries lagging economically behind the advanced countries of the West within a brief space of time.

One of Chernyshevsky's great services to the Russian revolutionary movement and, in the final analysis, to the working-class movement was that by his propaganda work, his articles in *Sovremennik* and especially by his novel *What Is To Be Done?* (1863) he greatly contributed to the appearance of first Russian revolutionaries.[3]

Lenin pointed out "the powerful appeals of Chernyshevsky, who was able, by means even of censored articles, to educate genuine *revolutionaries*".[4] Among them were the well-known figures of the sixties, whose activities were inseparably linked with the history of both the Russian revolutionary-democratic and the European proletarian movement (E. L. Dmitriyeva, A. V. Korvin-Krukovskaya, P. L. Lavrov, G. A. Lopatin, A. A. Serno-Solovyevich, and N. A. Serno-

---

[1] Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 341.

[2] Ibid., Vol. V, p. 381.

[3] For greater detail see: A. I. Volodin, *The Origins of Socialist Thought in Russia*. Moscow, 1966 (in Russian). In addition, the novel *What Is To Be Done?* contributed to the involvement of workers in Russia's first producers' co-operatives ("production associations"), which were set up in Moscow, Saratov, and Kaluga province in the mid 1860s. See: *A History of the Working Class in Russia 1861-1900*. Moscow, 1972, pp. 77-8, (in Russian).

[4] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 39.

Solovyevich, etc.). They were not Marxists, although they regarded Marx with utmost respect. Like Chernyshevsky these revolutionaries reposed their hopes in village community self-government and community landownership, which, in their view, was to become the basis for socialist transformations. Their socialist views were one of the varieties of petty-bourgeois socialism.

Some concepts of Utopian socialism were reflected in the writings of such outstanding representatives of revolutionary democracy as the Hungarian poet and revolutionary leader Sándor Petöfi (1823-1849), the Polish philosopher E. Dembowski (1822-1846), and the Romanian historian and publicist N. Bălcescu (1819-1852).

UTOPIAN SOCIALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The availability in the United States of vast areas of uninhabited land in the early decades of the 19th century generated among a considerable part of the workers an illusion that it was possible for them to become landowners. This illusion was still viable in the forties. In 1846 Marx levied scathing criticism on the German socialist Hermann Kriege, who called for an equal redistribution of the land in the United States as a means of salvation from capitalism.[1] In exactly the same way, George Evans, one of the founders of the Labour Party of New York, advertised in his newspaper *Working Men's Advocate* the idea of converting workers into small landowners. In 1828 the founder of the Labour Party in Philadelphia, Thomas Skidmore, published a book entitled *The Right of Man to Property* in which he developed similar ideas. He alleged that the right to life was equivalent to a right to own a plot of land. This plot must be of a size enabling its owner to cultivate it with his own hands.

Skidmore's Utopia was a peculiar reflection of the existing situation in US industrial and economic development: in contrast to Europe Luddism had not become widely popular here, and Skidmore called for the application of machinery to benefit the entire society, the poor first and foremost. For this purpose, the people should take possession of machines, just as other capitalist property. As a result, large enterprises would be owned by the workers.[2] In 1835, John Commerford, a prominent US labour leader, also expressed himself in favour of public control over machines and their use not for the enrichment of the minority but for the benefit of the majority. The governments would become legalised guardians of technological progress and enforce the use of machines to make the life of the people better and more comfortable.

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 41-44.
[2] Th. Skidmore, *The Right of Man to Property*, New York, 1829, p. 383.

Owen's Utopian socialism began to spread in the United States in the twenties. Among its first propagandists were his son Robert Dale Owen and Frances Wright. In the newspaper *Free Inquierer* they upheld the idea of organising farming communes in the spirit of Owen's doctrine. Early in 1825 Robert Owen came to the United States where he twice spoke in Congress and read a series of lectures in various cities to popularise the idea of model communist colonies. In addition to the settlement of New Harmony mentioned above another eighteen Owenite communes sprang up in the states of New York, Ohio, and Indiana between 1826-1827. All of them, however, were short-lived. In 1845 Owen appealed to his supporters to hold a world convention in New York City, so as to lay the foundation of a new social system in the New World. Although the convention took place, the matter did not go further than the adoption of a resolution.

Owenism, which retained its influence in the United States even after the communes had failed, laid the groundwork for the assimilation of Fourier's ideas. One of their first advocates was Albert Brisbane, who had adopted these ideas during his stay in France. In his book *Man's Destiny in Society* (New York, 1840), he argued that it was possible to set up phalanges in the United States. The most influential supporter of Fourierism in the United States was Horace Greeley (1811-1872). In 1841 he founded the newspaper *The New York Daily Tribune*, in which he published Brisbane's articles on Fourierism (between 1851 and 1862 Marx and Engels were among the contributors).

Before long, the number of Fourierists in the country grew to several thousand. There were many workers, especially artisan workmen, among them: shoe-makers, tailors, carpenters, joiners, house-painters, blacksmiths, stone-masons, etc. All of them were affiliated in a few dozen Fourierite communes which had sprung up in the states of Massachusetts, Illinois, and others. The first of them was Sylvania founded in the state of Pennsylvania in 1848, mostly with funds raised among the workers themselves. The shortage of capital, the absence of experience and the rigorous natural conditions led to the disintegration of the phalange a year later. Other colonies broke up in less than a year (only two of them survived for longer periods: one for six, the other for thirteen years). Just as the Owenite colonies their disintegration was speeded up by differences over the problems of management, education, the work and leisure routine, and, above all, by financial difficulties. What is more, the phalanges fell victim to land speculation by capitalists.

There was also the Brook Farm colony, which was founded near Boston in 1841 and transformed into a phalange in 1844 by George Ripley (1802-1880), a Utopian socialist, who translated and pub-

lished Saint-Simon's and Fourier's works in the United States. The colony constantly suffered from a shortage of funds, and disintegrated after a fire in 1846.[1]

UTOPIAN SOCIALISM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The socialist systems which were evolved in the earlier half of the 19th century differed in a number of traits from the earlier theories of Utopian socialism. Although the authors were, just as before, lonely day-dreamers, who invented plans of mankind's salvation in the quiet of their "ivory towers", in certain cases attempts were undertaken to translate into reality the schemes of the most outstanding Utopians. Social experiments, which as a rule, ended in failure, constituted an important part of the socialist movement in some countries. The socialist press came into being, newspapers and journals were published, representing various trends of socialist thought.

Utopian socialism and especially Utopian communism, as we shall see below, found their way into the midst of the working class, because these theories expressed the hopes and aspirations of the proletariat regardless of the intentions of their authors. The Utopian systems of the earlier half of the 19th century were born at the same time as industrial capitalism established itself and the working class matured in the main countries of Europe and America. This circumstance allows one to identify in the history of socialist Utopias a specific, supreme stage of development, which was replaced by a new developmental stage in the class self-awareness of the proletariat ushered in by the birth of the theory of scientific socialism.

Not infrequently, the Utopian socialists themselves failed to realise whose interests were expressed in their concept. Among the Utopians before the 19th century it was perhaps only Winstanley, Meslier, and the Babouvists that consciously connected their projects of social reforms with the social aspirations of the dispossessed class, regarding the realisation of their ideals as its vital necessity. However, even at a later date and even in the advanced countries of Western Europe and America the authors of socialist systems by no means always regarded their concepts as a product of class antagonisms and class oppression, an expression of the working people's aspirations for the establishment of a system free from the exploitation and oppression of man by man. Only among the Utopian Communists can we see an awareness of the fact that they expressed the interests

[1] L. Swift, *Brook Farm. Its Members, Scholars, and Visitors*, New York, 1900.

of the proletariat.[1] It is significant that the founders of scientific communism differentiated the systems of the most outstanding Utopians—Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen—from the doctrines of the revolutionary Utopian Communists.

To Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen, as Marx and Engels wrote, the proletariat offers the spectacle of a class without any historical initiative.... In the formation of their plans they are conscious of caring chiefly for the interests of the working class, as being the most suffering class. Only from the point of view of being the most suffering class does the proletariat exist for them.[2] Thus, Utopian socialism as a whole is a non-political socialism isolated from the practical struggle of the workers and from their vital needs. Lenin underscored, for example, the Utopian and fantastic character of the schemes of the old co-operators, starting from Owen, for they had dreamt of a peaceful remaking of the society of their time into a socialist society, ignoring such a fundamental problem as that of the class struggle and the seizure of political power.[3]

The strongest aspect in the systems of the great Utopian socialists is their constructive criticism of capitalism and the bourgeois revolutions, which gave rise to the idea of social community. In their positive programme they have the strongest links with the centuries-old tradition of social Utopia—the formation of conceptions of the future society as a perfect social system. The pictures of the future they painted reflected, of course, definite socio-economic relations and political structures of their time (for example, Saint-Simon in his scheme of an ideal society preserved private property and classes, and Fourier, a number of petty-bourgeois traits).

Nevertheless, their projects envisaged the development of the individual to be so high and satisfaction of his needs so full that they actually left no place for any aspirations of man. Besides, prescribing the resolution of all contradictions (down to the minor details of day-to-day and private life) was tantamount to planning the end of historical progress.

For all the fascinating prospects painted by Utopian socialism, these plans on the whole failed to attract the working people: the Utopian socialists and their doctrines were separated from life, "were not connected with the political movements of the people until large-scale machine industry drew the mass of proletarian workers into the vortex of political life, and until the true slogan of their struggle was found."[4]

---

[1] See Chapter 5.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 515.

[3] See: V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 467, 473.

[4] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 185.

In 1894 Lenin wrote that Utopian socialism on the whole bore an imprint of rationalistic and natural law concepts of the 17th-19th centuries. Before Marx, Lenin wrote, all Utopian socialist schemes showed traces of the idea which was most strikingly expressed in Rousseau's *Social Contract*: social relations come into being as a result of the conscious activity of people.[1]

Almost all 19th-century Utopian socialists proceeded from the proposition that all man's virtues and vices are conditioned by circumstances. All the three great Utopians believed in the vast potentialities of human reason and asserted that the main obstacle to human happiness—ignorance—could be overcome through enlightenment. All of them shared the historical optimism of the 18th-century Enlighteners, and criticised the society of their time from the positions of rationalism, arguing that the irrationality of a given society is the root cause of evil and human suffering; the other causes are related to this primary evil as secondary and dependent upon it.

The rationalism of Utopian socialists differed from abstract rationalism in that they regarded reason as a social category synonymous with justice. Pervaded with sentiments of compassion and resentment, the idea of social justice became the core around which they formed their systems. However, this idea was not the brainchild of individual thinkers. It is alive within the masses of working people, and is naturally supplemented in their minds with the idea of protest against class oppression and exploitation. "For the mass of semi-proletarians ... and for the majority of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie ... it is not an empty phrase, but a most acute, most burning and immense question of death from starvation, of a crust of bread."[2] It was the inspiring idea of social justice that made the Utopian socialists—even when they were no more than armchair visionaries practically out of touch with the life and struggle of the working class—the heralds or mouthpieces of its aspirations at a time when it had not yet evolved its own ideology.

In the theories of the Utopians the idea of equality is closely bound up with the idea of justice. It assumed definite reactionary aspects as the proletarian movement made progress. This idea was taken up by petty bourgeois socialism, which Lenin described as "the socialism of equality for petty proprietors."[3] As the legacy of the egalitarian trends of the 18th century this socialism in the 19th century reflected the desire of the craftsmen and the urban petty bourgeoisie to protect themselves against the onslaught of

[1] Ibid., p. 139.
[2] Ibid., Vol. 26, p. 129.
[3] Ibid., Vol. 12, p. 354.

the big capitalists by instituting economic equality of commodity producers. "The era of democratic change in Europe," Lenin wrote in this connection, "was characterised by domination of *petty-bourgeois* socialism ... in various forms."[1] The disillusionment with the bourgeois democratic slogans in the wake of bourgeois revolutions, in which the working class had been a major motive force, undermined this domination and paved the road for the triumph of Marxism.

Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen did not directly represent the proletariat, which already in its final formative stage in the most developed countries of Europe was emerging on the historical scene. The exponents of critical Utopian socialism placed all their hopes on peaceful propaganda within all classes, on persuasion by example, on reformatory work rather than on the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. The narrowness of their concepts was historically conditioned. In 1873 Marx pointed out that the patriarchs of socialism had inevitably to confine themselves mainly to visionary schemes because social relations were as yet undeveloped, and it was impossible for the proletariat to organise into a fighting class.[2] This does not mean, however, that the great Utopian socialists played no positive role with regard to the labour movement of their time and later periods.

On the contrary, it was the criticism by the great Utopians of the entire tenor of life of bourgeois society, i.e., the strongest aspect of their doctrines that, despite their negative attitude to the political and class struggle by the proletariat, furnished highly valuable material for the enlightenment of the workers, for the labour movement, and, eventually, for the education of the proletariat in the spirit of class struggle. Theoreticians of the working class of the pre-Marxian period, in particular such Utopian Communists as T. Dézamy[3] supplemented and developed this criticism in the conditions of more developed capitalism. The founders of scientific socialism themselves not infrequently indicated a definite genetic link between their ideas and those of the great Utopians. For instance, in a letter to F. Sorge of October 19, 1877, Marx pointed out that prior to its appearance scientific socialism had existed in embryo in the socialism of the great Utopians.[4] Significantly, at the time of writing *The Holy Family*, when they were evolving the principles of their revolutionary materialistic views, Marx and Engels conceived of publishing for propaganda purposes a series of books on the history of socialism and communism in France and England beginning from

[1] *Lenin Miscellany V*, p. 435 (in Russian).
[2] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18, S. 301.
[3] See Chapter 5.
[4] See: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 310.

the 18th century, primarily writings by Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen.

Owen rendered especially important services to the labour movement. Owen himself and many of his disciples and followers disseminated socialist ideas within the midst of the working class. Engels pointed out that "in England, already from 1821, socialist conclusions were drawn and at times with such forcefulness and determination that this literature ... had remained unsurpassed before the appearance of *Capital*."[1] Owen's plans of social reformation and large amounts of literature on the social problems exerted a serious ideological influence on the masses of English working people. The French socialist Flora Tristan alleged after her visit to England in 1839 that of the 16 million people living in that country at least 500,000 were socialists.[2] This was, of course, an exaggeration, yet it evidenced the powerful impact of the great Utopian's ideas on the masses.

The analysis by the Utopian socialists of the 1830s and 1840s of the working people's conditions under capitalism was real assistance to the labour movement. The Utopians emphasised the forced character of wage labour, the industrial workers first and foremost. For example, Saint-Simon in the *Catéchisme des industriels* described work at capitalist enterprises as slavery, exhausting labour devoid of any attraction. Fourier wrote that the worker goes to the factory, impelled only by poverty, by the need to sell his labour power[3]; the hard conditions of work create a situation where hired workmen "revolt against labour, which leaves the working people nothing but the lot of privations, slavery and despair."[4]

In their plans of an ideal society the Utopians gave an important place to emancipated labour, which they regarded as the basis for developing man's endowments and abilities, a source of comradely co-operation, brotherhood and moral perfection, the main stimulus to vital activity. While upholding the principle of universal obligation to work, they demanded at the same time the availability of work to all. Under the impression of the concrete realities of the early 19th century, when crises and unemployment aggravated the plight of the workers, the Utopians came forward with an impassioned denunciation of bourgeois society for its extravagant waste of human resources. In this context they advanced the idea of the right

---

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, S. 176.

[2] R. K. P. Pankhurst, *William Thompson (1775-1833). Britain's Pioneer Socialist, Feminist and Cooperator*. London, 1954, p. 198.

[3] *Oeuvres complètes de Charles Fourier*, Tome VI, Paris, 1966, p. 92.

[4] "Manuscrits de Fourier. Du Garantisme, lymbe ambigue ou ambiante". In: *Publications des manuscrits de Fourier*, t. 3, *La phalangue*, Paris, 1850, pp. 294-95.

to work. For example, Fourier demanded that "top priority should be given to the right to work, without which all other rights are meaningless."[1] For his part, Owen wrote that all people should be provided with good jobs. What is more, he insisted on state interference in the relations between labour and capital, on the enactment of legislation on labour protection. It was largely due to the efforts of Owen and his followers that laws on the protection of the labour of children and adolescents were adopted in England, and in 1847 a law on the ten-hour working day was passed, which Marx described as a victory of the political economy of the working class over the political economy of the bourgeoisie.[2] Owen also did much to strengthen the trade unions in England, which were in his day the most important form of working class organisation. His agitation facilitated the abrogation in 1824 of the law banning labour coalitions, whereupon a network of such unions was extended throughout the country, and these unions more and more often resorted to the strike weapon. Equally great were Owen's services in developing the co-operative movement, which were highly appreciated by Marx.[3]

The great Utopian socialists exposed many antagonisms of capitalism: the antagonism between society and the individual, the impoverishment of the working people (in Fourier's apt remark, "poverty is born of affluence itself"[4]), etc. The objective logic of their concepts implied the need to abolish private property, although they themselves did not always draw this conclusion. Owen went in this direction further than others; he consistently connected the triumph of socialism with the establishment of public property. Owen also made a practical attempt to connect his socialist plans with the labour movement. What is more, his socialist ideas were adopted by the Chartists. They further developed and connected them with the struggle for political power, with the task of founding a political party independent of the bourgeoisie.[5]

Thus, Owen's entire activities, his criticism of capitalism, and his struggle for labour legislation and for the establishment of public ownership laid the groundwork for the adoption of the Chartist slogans by the workers.

The views of the Utopian socialists contained many elements that, once they became widespread, cultivated social optimism in the working class, the faith of the proletarians in their strength. This was an important stage in the development of the class self-awareness

---

[1] *Oeuvres complètes de Charles Fourier. Théorie des quatre mouvements.* Troisiéme partie, Paris, 1841, p. 289.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 16.

[3] Ibid., p. 17.

[4] *Oeuvres complètes de Charles Fourier*, Tome VI, p. 35.

[5] See Chapter 5.

of the proletariat. It directly preceded the period when such a powerful moral factor came into play as the understanding by the workers of their historical role in social transformation. One should note in this context the great importance of the socialist ideal painted by the Utopians. Having indicated the unlimited prospects of man's power over nature and, consequently, of multiplying social wealth, the Utopian socialists replaced the former ideal of ascetic and primitively egalitarian communism by another one—based on unlimited satisfaction of the material requirements of men as a condition of their happiness.

It is also necessary to emphasise the fact that the great Utopians of the 19th century continued the traditions of humanistic and enlightening thought, which denied the religious conceptions of moral evil (the original sin, redemption, retribution, etc.) and the bourgeois conceptions of social evil ensuing allegedly from the distorted, spoiled nature of man; they emphasised the decisive role of the environment and education in the moulding of the human personality.

The real predestination of the proletariat was as yet uncertain to the great Utopians, but towards the end of his life Saint-Simon singled out the proletariat from the midst of the industrials and demanded its recognition as a full-fledged component of society, while Owen allowed for the legitimacy of independent actions of the working class in defence of its interests. He perspicaciously noted that assistance in the great social changes that were to occur in the country would come not from the Whigs, the Tories or the Church. Relief, he said, "must come from the working classes; for they alone are the sufferers, and they alone can effect the change."[1]

The Utopian socialists, especially the great Utopians, left to the working class movement many notions, slogans and formulas which have become, directly or in a modified form, part of the ideology of scientific socialism. Filled with a new concrete meaning they became ideological weapons in the class struggle of the proletariat. For example, in the 1820s and 1830s the word "socialism" coined by the Owenites in England and the word "communism" coined by the French Utopians in the thirties entered the vocabulary in all European countries.[2]

---

[1] *The Crisis*, December 7, 1833, p. 1.

[2] The word "socialism" first appeared in print in 1827 in the *Cooperative Magazine*, a London trade union organ of the Owenite orientation, and in 1832 it was used in the Saint-Simonian journal *Le globe* published by P. Leroux at the time. This term came into broad use after the publication of *Socialism and Communism in Present-Day France* by L. von Stein in 1842. Already in the late 18th century in the midst of the Babouvists advocates of the communal system had been called "communotists". The terms "communism", "Communist" became common in France in the late thirties. They had been introduced into broad usage by E. Cabet. (G. Lichtheim. *The Origins of Socialism*, London, 1968,

Saint-Simon and his followers gave mankind their formulas defining the main principle of socialism—"From each according to his abilities, to each ability according to its work" and "Each must occupy a place in society in accordance with his abilities and be rewarded in accordance with his deeds". It was the Saint-Simonians who first came out with the expression "abolition of the exploitation of man by man". In words similar in essence to the opening paragraph of the first chapter of the *Communist Manifesto* they expressed in salient relief their teacher's views on the classes and class struggle: "To the present day man has been exploited by man. Master and slave, patrician and plebeian, seigneur and serf, land-owner and lease-holder, loafer and working man—such is the history of mankind up to date." Engels noted that "...in Saint-Simon we find a comprehensive breadth of view, by virtue of which almost all the ideas of later Socialists that are not strictly economic are found in him in embryo..."[1]

Saint-Simon had a rudimentary understanding of the class struggle, a number of ideas and notions pertaining to a conception of the planned economy in the future society. Owen's follower W. Thompson used the term "surplus value", though in a meaning widely different from Marx's. The notion of "producing powers" in Owen's writings became, as a slightly modified term, a major economic and sociological category in Marxism.

In the doctrines of Saint-Simon and the Saint-Simonians, Fourier and Owen Utopian socialism reached the pinnacle of its development. The legacy of the three great Utopians of the 19th century contained an immense number of fruitful ideas, which later were modified and became part of Marxism and have largely retained their significance to date. Owen's teaching on the abolition of the antagonism between town and country, his ideas of co-operatives and his pedagogical theories (of the polytechnical education in the first place); the important pronouncements by Saint-Simon and the Saint-Simonians on the new role of the banks and credit in view of the emergence of joint-stock societies, on the principle of remuneration under socialism (from each according to his ability, to each according to his work), on the application of dialectics to an analysis of historical events, in particular, the cycles of historical development through "organic" epochs (with the resultant possibility to foresee the future to a definite extent); Fourier's arguments to the effect that in certain circumstances society can leap over the stage of "guarantism" (i.e.,

---

p. 219; see also G. A. Bagaturiya, *The Contours of the Future*, Moscow, 1972, p. 17; V. P. Volgin, *French Utopian Communism*, p. 138 (both in Russian); J. F. C. Harrison, op. cit., pp. 45-46; H. Müller, *Ursprung und Geschichte des Wortes "Sozialismus" und seiner Verwandten*, Hannover, 1967.

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 121.

arrive at socialism, bypassing the stage of capitalism), his views on the development of society by stages and many others were critically assimilated, revised and served as a source of scientific communism.

With the advent of scientific communism Utopian socialism as a whole lost its former significance as a form of social thought. However, it by no means became and is not at present only a relic of history. On the contrary, although in the present epoch the ideas of scientific communism have won the minds of millions upon millions of working people in all continents, social Utopias dressed in various garb have also become rather wide-spread. This applies mainly to certain strata of the working people in the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and partly to certain contingents of the working people in the industrialised countries of the capitalist world.

The revival of the ideas of Utopian socialism at some places in our day is not surprising at all: the old varieties of socialist thought come to life in a new image wherever there is social soil that nourishes and nurtures them, and such soil does exist both in the developing countries and in the countries of state monopoly capitalism.

On the one hand, vast areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which were but recently the agrarian and raw materials appendages of the imperial countries, have now embarked on the path of industrial development: the peoples of dozens of countries have won political independence and are successfully fighting for economic independence. In these countries the ranks of the proletariat are swelling; the revolutionary movement draws in enormous masses of workers, peasants and craftsmen, to whom the ideas of socialism have an exceptionally powerful appeal.

On the other hand, in the citadels of imperialism the social basis for the anti-monopoly struggle is steadily widening, because ever new contingents of manual and mental workers, members of the middle classes in town and country, and intellectuals directly join the ranks of the working class or draw increasingly closer to it. In search of a way out of the oppression to which capitalism dooms them they also turn their attention to socialist ideas.

However, both in the developing countries and in the industrial capitalist countries the popularity of socialist ideas is growing in a situation where millions of people attracted to them are still captives of traditionalist, primarily petty-bourgeois and sometimes even patriarchal-feudal ideology; they are often unfamiliar with Marxism or influenced by reactionary anti-communist propaganda fomenting hostility towards real socialism. Under such circumstances the process of assimilation of socialist ideas is inevitably accompanied by the revival in modified forms of the ideology of Utopian socialism

(which in its time, too, reflected immature social relations); to quote Lenin—"by repetitions of old mistakes, by a temporary reversion to antiquated views."[1]

As is known, Lenin thought of this possibility when revealing the objective basis for a revival of Utopian socialism, in particular, in countries where "this lack of economic development results in the survival and revival, in one form or another, of the backward forms of a socialism."[2] Although they were—on a worldwide historical scale—overcome by scientific communism critically and logically, such views recur in a different verbal guise (adapted to the needs of the current period): in the form of a Saint-Simonian (genetically) approval of large-scale capitalist enterprise, the syndicalist tendencies of Owenism, petty-bourgeois illusions ascending to Sismondi or Proudhon's anarchism, attempts (in the manner of Constant, Buchet, Lamennais) to substantiate the principles of communism with religious texts of early Christianity, etc.

At the present stage such modified forms of Utopian socialism are sometimes reflected in the ideology of the national liberation movement. Utopian ideas in such instances are usually taken up as a slogan for progressive social reforms in developing countries of Asia and Africa. Here they find expression in the constructions of the so-called national socialism, which combines in an eclectic manner elements of Utopian and scientific socialism, social-reformism and various religious systems. At the same time, some aspects of socialist doctrines influence to a certain extent the minds of many members of the proletarianising strata of society in the industrial capitalist countries; the immature social protest of these strata (including left radical intellectuals, students, etc.) against the oppressive burden of state monopoly capitalism transforms at times into intoxicating radiant dreams and tends to take the form of various technocratic "models" of a future society free from the vices of capitalism rather than clearcut socio-political programmes. Individual components of these "models" on close scrutiny turn out to be nothing else than transformed concepts of Utopian socialism of the earlier half of the 19th century.

---

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 348.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 309.

Chapter 5

THE EMERGENCE OF THE POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

THE PRACTICES OF THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

The revolution of July 1830 in France was a milestone in the history of the working-class movement and had a strong impact on the political life of Europe. The workers of Paris were the most militant and formidable force in that revolution. It was their vigorous intervention that brought about the success of the "three splendid days", during which the power of the Bourbon dynasty collapsed. That was the first massive action of the proletarians in history that toppled a political regime.

However, the workers gained nothing from the revolution either politically or socially. The elite of the bourgeoisie appropriated the fruits of their struggle. This was made possible primarily by the gullibility of the workers: the majority of them did not suspect that the bourgeois opponents of the Restoration regime regarded the proletarians as merely a tool for achieving their selfish class objectives. The revolutionary and republican Auguste Blanqui, who fought in the ranks of the workers against the troops of Charles X, said later, in 1832, that when the fighting was over the people of Paris left the city squares because they trusted the bourgeois politicians. "It was then that the bourgeois climbed out of their cellars and turned out by the thousands into the streets deserted after the street fighters had left. All remember how the aspect of the Parisian streets changed unexpectedly, miraculously, as though on a theatrical stage, how jackets gave place to frock-coats, how some vanished while others sprang up like mushrooms as if by the stroke of a magic wand. This happened because bullets did not whistle any longer. Now one did not need to fear blows but could bag the loot."[1]

Thenceforth the proletarians, heirs to the sansculottes, who were operating in a new situation and were much more powerful than the

[1] A. Blanqui, *Textes choisis*, Paris. 1971, p. 90.

plebs in the late 18th century, had to learn anew a lesson of distrust of the bourgeoisie and to make sure of its class selfishness.

The English workers found themselves in a similar situation at that time. They had actively supported the bourgeoisie in its struggle for widening suffrage, for the Reform Bill (1832). Before long, however, it became clear that the bourgeoisie had used the victory they had won exclusively in its own interests. Then, in the latter half of the 30s the mass of the English workers arose to struggle for the Charter, whose political meaning consisted in a demand for universal suffrage. In this way they expected to achieve social reforms in the interests of the working class. The English workers went further than the French along the path towards political independence: their struggle for democracy in the course of the mass Chartist movement assumed a specifically proletarian, revolutionary and anti-bourgeois class character.

This was attributable at least to three causes. First, the workers of England had gained substantial experience in the economic struggle. While waging it, they came up against a wall of anti-labour laws with which the bourgeoisie had surrounded itself. This drew them into a conflict with the bourgeois state and the bourgeois class as a whole. Second, in the eyes of the revolutionary English proletarians the demand for a "right to power" was not equivalent to a renunciation of the sacred principle of "democracy for the whole people", because the manual and factory workers already constituted the majority of the nation. Third, the boundaries of the working class in England were much more clearly defined than in France. In England in the 30s and 40s the Industrial Revolution was nearing completion, and the stratum of small owners of means of production was being eroded at a speed unheard of before.[1]

The aspirations of the English and the French workers in the period of the struggle for political differentiation from the bourgeoisie were also different in that the revolutionary French proletarians arrived at the communist ideals earlier than the left wing of the Chartists; the English workers, however, were the first to begin the struggle for power. In France the communist tradition of Babeuf revived at that time; in England, the revolutionary Chartists, who had already come out, in fact, for the conversion of the proletariat into a ruling class, did not adhere to the communist views. This difference stemmed from the specifics of the historical development of the two countries. The French Revolution had created a viable tradition of republicanism, which the Empire and the Restoration stifled rather than killed. The struggle for a republic in a country where the workers constitut-

[1] For greater detail see: N. A. Yerofeyev, "The Development of Capitalism and the Formation of the Reserve Labour Force in England in the Chartist Period", *Chartism*, Collected Articles, Moscow, 1961, pp. 97-167.

ed a tiny minority of the population and were still following in the wake of the bourgeoisie politically was tantamount objectively to a struggle for a bourgeois republic. The historical experience of violence against the exploiters, their suppression and extermination, and far-reaching interference in property relations (a matter of the recent past, of the time of the great revolution) undermined respect for the "life and property" of the oppressors for a long time in France. In England, however, the workers struggled against the bourgeois law in the name of the abstract "law in general" and "justice for all". This was the reason why in France rebellion against the prevailing order meant street fighting and barricades, whereas in England it took the form of a nationwide political strike.

The above-mentioned differences emphasise rather than nullify the common character of the main trends in the development of the class struggle of the proletariat in these countries. In both of them the working class moved towards political independence, regarding the establishment of a democratic social system as its immediate task. It realised the existing opposition of its interests to those of the bourgeoisie from its own experience only after it had paved for the latter the road towards political power. The workers' struggle for political independence in the pre-Marxist period had its results not only in that the class-conscious workers (in France they were a small stratum, and in England they constituted a mass movement) refused to act as a tool of the bourgeoisie but also in that they sought to remake society in their own interest.

As for Germany, the labour movement there was considerably delayed in consequence of the country's general economic and political backwardness. However, the most essential of the general trends—the gravitation of the class-conscious workers towards political independence and towards remaking society in the interest of the working people and other exploited strata—became clearly manifest already in the 30s and the early 40s.

LABOUR REVOLTS IN FRANCE. THE PROLETARIANS AND THE REPUBLICANS

In November 1831 France was shaken by a revolt of the workers of Lyons, the country's second biggest industrial city.[1] That was a historic event indeed. The world had not yet known such a massive, determined and independent action of the workers.

The Lyons uprising took place in the conditions of a specific organisation of industrial production which had largely retained its man-

[1] For greater detail see: F. V. Potemkin, *The Lyons Uprisings of 1831 and 1834*, Moscow, 1937 (in Russian).

ufactory image: about 400 merchants (capitalist buyers-up) purchased raw silk and awarded orders to 8,000 small workshop owners employing 30,000 weavers altogether. The workshop owner and his family usually worked together with the workmen, who were entitled to one half of the payments made by the merchant. The shop-owner and his workmen often made a joint stand against the latter. A weaver earned about 450 francs for 300 workdays per year, which was far below the subsistence minimum. The working day of the weavers lasted 15 hours (excluding breaks for rest and meals). Their work was arduous, and many operations posed health hazards. For example, women who did the primary processing of cocoons died at a young age; consumption was their occupational disease. The workmen lived in old, filthy neighbourhoods.

In 1826 the silk-weaving industry of Lyons was hit by a severe crisis caused by a curtailment of orders from England, the United States and South American countries. The crisis made the plight of the workers still worse. They toiled for a mere pittance of a wage, and many had to go begging to procure meager food for themselves and their families; hundreds of families had left the city.

The workers tried to organise. In 1830 they attempted to raise a common fund with regular deductions from the earnings of each contributor to provide for emergency aid in the most difficult days. This plan, however, failed because of general poverty. Then, in February 1831, the 4,000 weavers of Lyons addressed a petition to the Chamber of Deputies in Paris. They complained of the "shamelessness" and "the disgraceful behaviour" of the merchants whose wealth was created by the toil of the proletarians.

The working people of Lyons boiled with anger at the merchants and their middlemen distributing orders among the workshops. Their resentment came to a head in March 1831 when the July monarchy had passed a new fiscal law which severely affected the poor sections of the population. The apartment tax (on windows and doors) aroused especially violent indignation. In the autumn of the same year, the merchants of Lyons, taking advantage of unemployment, entered into a collusion and simultaneously cut wage rates.

The workers appealed to the authorities for protection. At meetings on October 8 and 10 they elected a commission which sent the local prefect a message requesting him to act as an arbiter in their dispute with the employers. The workers were as yet reluctant to disturb, as they wrote, the harmony which should "exist in the relations between all classes of society". On October 25 a meeting of representatives of the employers and the workers was held under the chairmanship of the prefect. It approved a slight increase in the wage rate as proposed by the workers.

The merchants sent a complaint against the actions of the prefect

to the Chamber of Deputies. They declared their refusals to observe the agreement and objected to the very idea of a compulsory wage rate. Many of them threatened to close down their warehouses and offices.

The refusal of merchants caused an outburst of indignation among the weavers. On November 20, crowds of workers gathered in a square of the suburb of Croix-Rousse. They decided to stop work and on the next day to come to the city and jointly submit their demands to the authorities. The latter took steps to oppose them. The city police force was small, and its members feared the 100,000-strong mass of hungry and angry people. A legion of the National Guard which consisted of bourgeoisie blocked all the five gates on the roads from Croix-Rousse to Lyons to stop the workers.

It was the morning of November 21, 1831. The hour of the first armed confrontation between the workers and the bourgeoisie in history, was drawing nearer. The weavers pressed the guardsmen back. The latter opened fire on the crowd. The workers pelted them with stones and fought them with sticks; those who had firearms fired back. Having burst into Lyons, the workers captured a few buildings and put up barricades. In the meantime, battalions of the regular army attacked Croix-Rousse. The fighting continued late into the night. The workers, who had captured arms shops and depots quickly armed themselves. For their part the authorities called in reinforcements to Lyons. On the next morning fierce fighting flared up again. The workers hoisted a black banner with the slogan: "To live working or to die fighting!" That was not only a protest against unemployment and the threat of a lockout. The slogan implied that work gives one the right to live like a human being. Later, in 1842 such views inspired the English workers who rose for history's first class battle on a nationwide scale; they advanced the slogan: "Fair day's wages for fair day's work" (in contrast to the Lyons weavers the English proletarians already realised that to translate this slogan into life they should get access to political power).

On November 22, the fighting in Lyons grew fiercer. Workers from the distant suburbs of Brotteaux, Saint-Just and La Guillotière came to the aid of the fighters of Croix-Rousse and the Lyons districts. The garrison commander ordered cannon into position on a bridge in the suburb of Saint-Clair from where to shell Brotteaux. Then the workers attacked Saint-Clair and hurled the troops back. Fierce fighting lasted all day on the river embankments, and the barricades changed hands many times. The workers were fighting their way towards the city centre. On November 23, the army command decided to withdraw troops from Lyons. They had to retreat from the city, fighting continuously, under a hail of bullets. When the troops had abandoned the city, it came under the control of the insurgents. The

casualties during the three days of fighting in Lyons were quite severe: by eyewitness accounts, about 1,000 persons were killed or wounded. According to reports of the authorities, about 30,000 people took part in the uprising.

After the troops had retreated, the workers did not establish their own government but only took steps to maintain law and order in the city. They captured the arsenal, the town hall, and the gunpowder depot. Having established their headquarters, the insurgents did not arrest the prefect and the mayor, nor did they break off their communication with Paris, from where the latter were expecting aid. Such behaviour of the workers was largely due to the conciliatory attitude of the workshop owners who had taken part in the uprising. On November 24, the chief prosecutor of Lyons reported to the Minister of Justice: "All contrasts have become manifest in our population. It is starving but is not looting; it has revolted but is not abusing its victory; it has not recognized the government but has not abandoned the banner of this government.... What have been the results? The personality and property are respected, not counting one destroyed house."[1]

Eleven years would pass, and a similar situation would develop in a much larger area of England's industrial regions. An amazing coincidence of the general patterns of struggle would be observed. Several counties would fall into the hands of the workers; and here again troops would be unable to keep the situation under control; and the propertied classes would be seized with terror and then with amazement; and here again the workers, having become masters of the situation, far from encroaching on the "life and property" of their enemies, will take them under their protection. And here also they would establish a semblance of bodies of government, but would not challenge the prerogatives of the administration. And here also they would not know what to do next. And the judge who would examine the case of the strikers would say that the strike and uprising of 1842 have reminded him very much of the events in "the industrial city of Lyons in the Kingdom of France".[2]

There would also be appreciable differences, which would underline at the same time the similarity between the general traits of the behaviour of the English and the French workers. The English proletarians did not put up massive battles with troops fraught with bloodshed. The Lyons workers captured the city after three days of fierce fighting; nevertheless, the fighters of the barricades, who had rescued their wounded and buried their dead, did not start to act as an energetic government hostile to the existing system. The Lyons

[1] See: E. Tarle, *The Uprising of the Lyons Workers* (in Russian).—*The Archives of Marx and Engels*, *III*, p. 77.

[2] *The Leeds Mercury*, 22. X, 1842.

workers did not advance political slogans. On the contrary, the Chartist strike was a political action—an uprising in defence of the People's Charter. However, even the Chartists—political fighters full of hatred of the "mill-lords" and ready to starve themselves and their children to death in the struggle for the Charter also failed to act as a government.

Both were merely on the way towards political independence. To achieve this goal it was not enough to have the determination and heroism of the Lyons workers, and the political purposefulness of the Chartists was not sufficient either. To advance to real political independence it was necessary to know what to do about government, to have a social programme and to come out with labour legality against the prevailing bourgeois legality. An understanding of this could be gained only from further experience of class battles and a theoretically substantiated programme of actions.

On November 28, the troops which had retreated from Lyons were joined by reinforcements—a 20,000-strong army. On the next day the municipality ordered the workers to lay down their arms. The latter surrendered them reluctantly. They hid part of their weapons. On December 1, troops occupied the suburbs. On December 3, four regiments of the regular army entered the city. Fearing a recurrence of the stormy events, the government did not resort to mass bloody reprisals. Thousands of workers, however, were deported from the city. The Minister of the Interior forwarded to the prefects of all departments of France a circular in which he described the establishment of labour corporations with the object of achieving wage raises as a "violation of the public order". He demanded suppression of such actions.

The workers of Lyons came up against not only armed force but also quite a definite political stance of the July monarchy pervaded with hostility towards the workers. An association of workers was a political crime—such was the essence of that stance. The government and its machinery of coercion stood between the workers who sought to ensure a decent life for themselves and the capitalists who denied this life to them. Therefore the next action of the proletariat was inevitably bound to assume a political character. The idea of a republic which in 1831 in Lyons had possessed the minds of only a small group of democrats, began to acquire material force.

What is the special significance of the Lyons explosion in the chain of uprisings in that period? All of them—be it the revolutions in Paris, Naples, or Piedmont, or the actions of the radicals in England, or the armed struggle of the Carbonari in the Italian states—were to a varying degree the result of the powerful impulse given by the French Revolution of the late 18th century and advanced the struggle only to a definite limit. None of them challenged

the bourgeois order. The workers taking part in actions of this kind acted under the political guidance of the propertied classes. The Lyons uprising of 1831, however, announced to Europe that the workers were no longer willing to acquiesce in the situation where their work and life were fully dependent on bourgeois property, and that the proletarians were capable of acting independently of the whole social hierarchy standing above them, including the bourgeois classes. In a memorandum submitted to the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Peers in 1832, it was stated that the non-political character of the Lyons uprising posted the gravest "danger to society". The author of the memorandum, who evidently had a well-developed class instinct, was, in a sense, right. Significantly, Marx, who attached great importance to the uprising of the Lyons weavers, called attention primarily to what was, in effect, the social character of their actions.[1] Political demands, if they had been made by the Lyons workers taking the road of independent class struggle, could have been practically only bourgeois political demands, because the idea of a social republic was still alien to the proletarians at that time. Therefore, it was precisely abstention from political slogans that was at the time the only possible form of expression of the incipient political independence of the workers.

The Lyons uprising was an important landmark in the development of the main class conflict of capitalist society and contained in embryo the economic and political aspects of the future confrontation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The official and bourgeois Europe of that time could hardly be surprised by cannon fire in a thickly-populated city, or by the courage of insurgents, or hundreds of killed and wounded. It had more than once heard and seen all that. But the powers that be had not yet experienced an independent and formidable action of the workers against the emerging new law and order. They were shaken by this spectacle. All factions of the bourgeoisie agreed that society was threatened by a danger that should be eliminated.

* * *

The involvement of the French workers in political struggle was facilitated by republican propaganda. Already the July revolution had caused a growth in the number of republican organisations and groups and contributed to a widening of their influence. The politically organised republican movement originated in Paris. In the days of the revolution the *Société des amis du peuple* was set up here, and a republican group formed within it. Many of its members

[1] See: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 204.

later became known as petty-bourgeois democrats. Subsequently they gained considerable popularity among the workers. Auguste Blanqui, a prominent leader of the society, chose the path of a proletarian revolutionary and later became, as Marx put it, "the leader of the proletarian party in France".[1] The society took part in the actions of the Parisian working people in October 1830. It was also involved in the popular actions in Paris in February 1831, which had a republican colour, but it lacked sufficient support from the masses and hence was unable to guide them. In the early 30s the workers' unrest continued in Paris, but, as before, they had no political leaders. On June 25, 1832 there was a demonstration of Parisian working people against the government of Louis Philippe, which resulted in clashes with police and dragoons. The demonstration culminated in an uprising. The people of Paris had been armed since the period of the July revolution. The workers built barricades. It was only on the second day that the Paris garrison (25,000 officers and men) and the National Guard suppressed the resistance of the insurgents. They pressed the latter back into Saint-Martin Street, encircled them, and taking advantage of the overwhelming superiority in numbers, shot them down at point-blank range. The defeat of the workers in the June uprising of 1832 was a heavy blow to the republicans, and before long the *Société des amis du peuple* practically disintegrated.

Nevertheless, after some time new republican societies appeared, including the Society for Human and Civil Rights. It incorporated some scattered groups of the defunct *Société des amis du peuple*. Early in 1833 the society had 4,000 members in Paris. Conspicuous among its leaders was J. Kersausie, a former cavalry officer and a Carbonari, who inclined towards the views of the Babouvist Ph. Buonarroti. In the Society for Human and Civil Rights the Jacobin tradition prevailed; however, in contrast to the Jacobins of 1793 it sought to find a solution to the labour problem. The programme of the society attested to its radical democratism; the most consistent republicans were those members who were more closely linked with the workers. In one of its pamphlets the society promulgated the idea of co-operative labour associations owning machines. Its programme provided for universal suffrage, removable government, autonomy of communities combined with uniform state administration, recruitment of the National Guard from all sections of the population, democratisation of credit, taxes not onerous for "the poor, labour and industry", fairer division of labour and fairer distribution, which were to ensure the "emancipation of the working class", and the right to organise in unions. Behind the general repub-

[1] Karl Marx Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 126.

lican slogans one could see serious concern primarily for the interests of the labouring classes.

At that time a few local republican organisations operated in Lyons as well. A branch of the Society for Human and Civil Rights appeared there at the end of 1833 and conducted propaganda among the workers. The government's intention to impose a legislative ban on these associations caused indignation and reanimation of republican propaganda. The workers and republican organisations of Lyons formed a united committee. On April 5, 1834 there were clashes between workers and police there.

On April 9, 1834 a second workers' uprising broke out in Lyons. This time the workers fought under republican slogans. In the morning the republicans circulated leaflets in the city, which read "Liberty, equality, fraternity or death!" The leaflets appealed for a struggle against the bill to ban the unions. Crowds of workers gathered in the city. At about 10 a.m. the gendarmes fired upon unarmed weavers. The Lyons workers started to build barricades and hurriedly armed themselves. The insurgents joined battle under the slogan "Republic or death!" holding aloft red banners. Having captured important positions in the centre of Lyons, the insurgents attempted to incite to rebellion the population of the neighbouring villages.

The government forces put artillery into action. Punitive troops blew up houses in which the workers had entrenched themselves. Fierce fighting lasted in the city for several days. It was not before April 15 that the insurgent forces were defeated. However, on that, seventh day of the uprising groups of workers still continued to offer resistance in the suburb of Croix-Rousse. By the end of the uprising more than 30,000 regular troops had concentrated in the city.

In the days of the Lyons uprising the workers of Saint-Etienne, the suburbs of Grenoble, Arbois, Vienne and a number of other towns and townships also joined battle. On April 13-14 an uprising flared up in Paris. The Central Committee of the Society for Human and Civil Rights had not prepared for it. J. Kersausie and other influential members were arrested on the eve and on the day of the uprising. Only one section of the Society jointly with a few hundred proletarians gave battle to troops. On April 13 the city looked like an army camp. Forty thousand officers and men were placed on the alert. Fighting on the barricades lasted for two days in a small area of the city (in the region of Saint Martin, Neuve-Saint-Méry and Saint-Avoye streets, the neighbourhoods of Temple and Gravilliers). Towards the morning of April 14 the insurgents had been encircled. Troops shot down the defenders of the barricades at point-blank range, and then an infantry battalion rushed to Transnonain Street where an officer had been killed in an exchange of fire an hour before. Here

punitive troops broke into houses and brutally massacred residents suspected of sheltering insurgents. Officers and soldiers murdered old men, women and children with bayonets and point-blank fire.

It is hard to overestimate the historic significance of the uprisings of the Lyons workers, whose example was followed by the working people in Paris and other cities. Lyons was in the vanguard of the revolutionary working-class movement in France primarily because the working population of this city was remarkably uniform and compact. The first uprising was not politically coloured, but the second was clearly republican. Both of them, however, were independent actions of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, and in this broad sense they had objectively a political, proletarian class character. Therefore, in the history of the world working-class movement as a whole both of them were events of turning-point significance. Later, Engels, speaking of the "terrible seriousness" of the June uprising in Paris in 1848 and of the absence of any illusions among its participants, noted that in the whole past history of mankind there had been only two events comparable to the actions of the June insurgents—the slave war in Ancient Rome and the uprising in Lyons in 1834.[1]

After the suppression of the April uprisings of 1834 in Lyons and Paris, the government smashed up the Society for Human and Civil Rights. Now republican societies could exist only as underground organisations. Workers accounted for a steadily growing proportion of their membership.

In June 1834 the Society of the Families was set up with Blanqui playing the leading part within it. More than half of the members were craftsmen and small workshop owners. The questionnaire for applicants for membership gives an idea of the direction of its activities. Its members believed that the power was in the hands of the "money bags, bankers, suppliers, monopolists, rich landowners, stockjobbers—in short, the exploiters" who ruled "by right of force". The society included in the notion "people" "all people who work". It acted on behalf of "the poor proletarians". The final question "Should a political or a social revolution be carried out?" was to be answered: "It is necessary to carry out a social revolution." A social revolution, i.e., a revolutionary remaking of society was the goal; on the way towards it the government had to be overthrown. Thus, in the opinion of the Society, a social revolution implied rather than ruled out a political revolution.[2]

In 1837 Auguste Blanqui, Armand Barbès, and Martin Bernard organised the Society of the Seasons, which acted as a successor to

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 130.
[2] *Rapport fait à la cour par M. Mérilhou, Pair de France*, Paris, 1839, p. 13.

the Society of the Families. The demand of the new society was a republic where each working person was to be guaranteed "a secure existence". On May 12, 1839 the Society of the Seasons, which had about 900 members, organised an insurrection in Paris. Its time had been chosen with a view to the deteriorating position of the working people and growing unemployment as a result of the economic slump; in addition, the strife within the ruling clique of the July monarchy had become more bitter. The Blanquists intended to capture the Town Hall, the Paris prefecture, and the prefecture of the department of Seine by a surprise attack. They expected support from the people and had prepared an appeal to the Parisians. Blanqui had thoroughly considered the military plan of the uprising (the direction of the movement of columns of insurgents which were to concentrate at the appointed sites, the location of barricades, points to be captured immediately—bridges, military institutions, ministries, arms deports). In the early afternoon on May 12, a group of members of the society assembled on Saint-Martin Street and raided an arms shop. Then two columns led by Blanqui and Bernard moved to the Town Hall and captured it. The third column commanded by Barbès successfully attacked the Palace of Justice. From there the insurgents moved to the Paris prefecture, but came under police fire and had to retreat and join the column led by Blanqui.

From the Town Hall balcony Barbès announced the membership of the Provisional Government; Blanqui was named "commander-in-chief of the republican army." A leaflet circulated on behalf of the Provisional Government called the people "To Arms!" However, the insurgents were joined by only a few hundred men. Towards evening they had been defeated by units of the regular army. Blanqui was tried in April 1840 together with other insurgents. All of them were workers, craftsmen (tailors, shoe-makers, smiths, hatters, etc.) or small shop-owners.[1] The leader of the May uprising and the politically most active contingent of Parisian workers had languished in prison until February 1848, when he was freed by the revolution.

In 1839 a workers' uprising broke out on the other side of the Channel. At that time, the proletarians in England, as has been pointed out above, were coming forward under the slogan of the People's Charter. After in July 1839 the Parliament had rejected a petition for the adoption of the Charter as a statutory law, the workers more and more often turned to the idea of an armed uprising. What is more, in the conditions of the economic depression of the

[1] Analysing the history of the revolutionary associations of the period of the July monarchy, Marx and Engels called attention to the fact that the Society of the Seasons had been a proletarian organisation, and the uprising it had organised "was decidedly proletarian and communist" (see: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 316, 320).

late 30s their position continually deteriorated similarly to what was taking place in France.

On November 3, 1839 in Newport, South Wales, the Chartist workers led by John Frost armed themselves and moved on the city prison to free the popular Chartist Henry Vincent held in detention there. They expected that their action would trigger off an uprising in other cities. These hopes were dashed. Attempts to stir rebellion were made only at Sheffield and Nottingham, but the police and troops quickly brought the situation under control. The leaders of the movement were put on trial. The developments in Newport closely resembled those in Paris, and such coincidence cannot be regarded as accidental: both the English Chartist workers and the most consistent French Republicans ("the reds") who had the support of the politically active workers strove for independent and direct political action. The main mass of the workers, however, was not yet prepared for it.

In those years the great antagonists of modern history—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—for the first time measured swords, and each of them clearly saw the image of its adversary. The first scene of such confrontation was laid in France. The workers who had arisen for a struggle tended towards united mass actions and did not conceal their intention to remake society in the interest of the labouring classes. They discerned in political struggle an instrument for achieving this objective and hence followed the "red" Republicans. The workers were quite ready to uphold their right to association in a confrontation against capital. They realised that the existing state power represented the exploiter part of the nation, not the nation as a whole. The workers became spontaneously aware that in the struggle for the working-class cause they were upholding the interests, honour and dignity of the nation. They embodied its finest features—love of freedom, magnanimity, and nobleness, and they set up supreme examples of human valour. They showed their ability to act with courage and determination. However, they had not yet a clear goal, nor did they know many of the methods of struggle accessible to them; they had no organisation, no plan of political actions and, since they had neither knowledge nor ideology of their own, they often borrowed ideas advanced by leaders of non-proletarian liberation movements.

The antagonist of the proletariat—the bourgeoisie—constituted a social force of a fundamentally different kind. Absolute callousness in everything related to material gain; readiness to doom the proletarian for the sake of this gain to poverty, hunger and even death; determination to suppress his resistance with the power of the machinery of state; cowardice combined with unprecedented cruelty—this is what opened to the eyes of the proletarian. The bourgeoisie

acquainted him with its favourite means of struggle—ruthless massacres, bloody political revenge and slander of the fallen fighters. On its side was the power of the state, the army, the Church, wealth, knowledge and political experience.

Now each of the sides was groping for vulnerable spots of the enemy, working out the objectives and methods of struggle. In anticipation of new battles they were searching for allies.

In those years of the formation of the class self-awareness of the proletariat much was without precedent in its history: the first great lesson on the road towards political independence—the first appropriation by the bourgeoisie of the fruits of the people's victorious uprising, the first uprising of the workers of an industrial city in defence of their social interests, the first organised action of the workers for a republic, the first red banner hoisted over the barricades.

After the crackdown on the workers' clandestine societies in the late 30s the proletarian movement in France did not lose its political character. The strike struggles assumed wider scope; in a situation where strikes and unions were officially banned this meant a growing conflict with the government. In the last years of the July monarchy new secret societies were formed.

At that time a large part of the workers supported the petty-bourgeois Republicans, who were led by A. Ledru-Rollin and grouped around the newspaper *Réforme*. They came out for universal suffrage and social reforms. Some of the "reformers" were socialists of the petty-bourgeois type. In the words of Engels, the workers who sided with the democratic Republicans were their "very distrustful allies, and adhered more closely to them or moved farther away from them, according to whether the *Réforme* people acted with more resolution or with more vacillation."[1]

The most class-conscious and enlightened workers were followers of Étienne Cabet, Théodore Dézamy, and Auguste Blanqui who propagated the ideas of Utopian workers' communism.

THE LEAGUE OF THE JUST INDEPENDENT ACTIONS OF THE GERMAN WORKERS

The first political organisation of German craftsmen and political emigres from among the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, which came forward with a democratic programme, was founded in Paris in 1832 and existed until 1834. This was the German People's Union, which shared the republican convictions of the Society for Human Rights. The union set up illegal ties with sympathetic groups and individuals in different states of the German Union. In its documents

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 124.

it appealed to working people: peasants, millers, bakers, joiners, tanners, tailors. The union advanced the slogan: "No honest man shall eat unless he has earned his bread by his work."[1]

After the promulgation by the government of Louis Philippe of a law banning coalitions (April 1834) the members of the disbanded union set up the illegal Outlaws' League. This was a strictly clandestine organisation, whose members were mostly workers, though it was headed by petty-bourgeois Republicans. Branches of the League, which had its headquarters in Paris, were set up also in German states.[2]

The League proclaimed as its goals the liberation of Germany, "establishment and preservation of social and political equality, freedom, civic virtue and national unity first in those countries where the German language and customs prevail and subsequently for all other peoples of the world". In the leaflet "The Symbol of Faith for the Outcast" issued by the League its basic principles were also proclaimed to be a democratic republic, government by the people, provision of reliable subsistence for all citizens, exemption of the poor from taxes. The authors of the document stated: "Only a united strong Germany will be able to guarantee its citizens a secure position in the state, a reign of freedom and equality, law and virtue, and to protect them."[3]

The most prominent leaders of the Outlaws' League were the journalist Jakob Venedy and the physician Theodor Schuster. To Venedy liberation of Germany meant a republic and a radical reform of the taxation system. Schuster was a socialist of the Sismondi type, who believed that the republican form of government would not bring benefits to the working people until an end was put to the situation where the working class was deprived of property.

In 1836-1837 the Outlaws' League was left by a breakaway group of extremist, mainly proletarian elements who were under the influence of the Babouvist traditions and the French revolutionary and labour movement of that time (Heinrich Ahrends, B. Bernhardt, A. Mäurer, and later Wilhelm Weitling and Heinrich Bauer). They set up a new organisation—the League of the Just. Many years later Marx wrote: "The Communist League was founded—originally under a different name—in Paris in 1836."[4]

---

[1] W. Kowalski, Vorgeschichte und Entstehung des Bundes der Gerechten, Berlin, 1962, S. 177 (Anhang).

[2] For greater detail see: K.Oberman, "A Look at the Early History of the German Labour Movement (1833-1836) in *The Labour Movement in the Modern Times*, Moscow, 1964, pp. 37-74 (in Russian).

[3] *The Communist League—the Prototype of the First International.* Collected documents, Moscow, 1964, p. 46 (in Russian).

[4] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd.14, S. 438.

As evidenced by Engels, "the members in so far as they were workers at all, were almost exclusively artisans";[1] they were exploited for the most part by small masters. Nevertheless, though they were not yet true proletarians but only belonged to that part of the petty bourgeoisie which was just entering the ranks of the proletariat and was not yet directly antagonistic to big capital, these craftsmen, as Engels wrote, "were capable of instinctively anticipating their future development and of constituting themselves, even if not yet with full consciousness, the party of the proletariat". However, he emphasised, "their old handicraft prejudices should be a stumbling block to them at every moment, whenever it was a question of criticising existing society in detail, that is, of investigating economic facts. And I do not believe there was a single man in the whole League at that time who had ever read a book on political economy."[2]

Soon the political core of the League of the Just was reinforced by craftsmen who had come from Switzerland, where they had constituted a proletarian group in the radical democratic organisation Young Germany (1834-1836). This organisation advanced as its main demand the slogan of establishing a united German democratic republic. The radicals of Young Germany set up ties with German craftsmen's clubs. Relying on the latter, the organisation turned into a strong political force. On July 27, 1834 German craftsmen from Bern and its environs assembled for a large meeting and demonstration at Steinholzli under the slogans of unity and freedom of Germany. In Engels' assessment, this meeting was of a purely political character; it had been held before communists appeared among the workers.[3]

When under the pressure of the German governments the Swiss cantons deported from the country the activists of Young Germany the latter ceased to exist. A group of politically active craftsmen, who were its members, left for Paris. Some of them, including the type-setter Karl Schapper and the watch-maker Joseph Moll joined the League of the Just. That was how a stable core of class-conscious workers, primarily journeymen, formed within it. They held communist views of different trends. In the early years the views of the French Utopian communist E. Cabet and K. Schapper, who was a champion of common property and a determined fighter for a united democratic Germany, wielded the greatest influence. In the late 30s and early 40s the system of views of Wilhelm Weitling, one of the most remarkable exponents of workers' communism, began to prevail in the League. His pamphlet *Mankind As It Is and As It*

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Selected Works, in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 177.
[2] Ibid., p. 178.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 412.

Should Be (1839) was recognised as a programme document of the League.

The reprisals that followed the crackdown on the Society of the Seasons in May 1839 compelled part of the members of the League of the Just to leave Paris. Weitling went to Switzerland, Moll, Schapper and Bauer to London. In London they organised a community of the League of the Just and the Workers' Educational Association. The London community maintained ties not only with the Parisian and Swiss branches of the League but also with clandestine unions of craftsmen in the German states.

Towards the mid-forties when the ideological decline of Weitlingianism began (religious and sentimental motives began to prevail in Weitling's works) a considerable part of the membership of the League of the Just came under the influence of "genuine socialism"—a petty-bourgeois parody of French workers' communism and English Chartism.[1] The distrust which the "genuine socialists" had in the liberals, accusing the latter of bourgeois class egoism found expression not in recognition of the need for independent struggle of the working people but, on the contrary, in a refusal to take part in this struggle and turned into advocacy of total political abstention. The "genuine socialists" interpreted the backwardness of German society as a fundamental distinction of Germany's historical path; having denounced capitalism, they maintained that its development could be prevented by moral means—by preaching "universal love" and condemning injustice. They treated history like a railway guidebook, which helps one choose a convenient route. Having rejected political action and practical struggle against capitalism on the social foundation created by it, "genuine socialism" proved to be a hodgepodge of sentimental good wishes, nationalistic aspirations and pseudo-revolutionary verbiage.

For all that this fantastic mixture was not devoid of a certain attraction in the eyes of the German artisan workmen. The influence of "genuine socialism" in the League of the Just was fairly strong. However, as front-ranking German workers turned their attention to scientific socialism, they abandoned the views of "genuine socialism", which towards 1845 had formed an ideological alloy with degenerated Weitlingianism.

On November 25, 1845, K. Schapper, speaking at a regular discussion in London's Workers' Educational Association, declared: "Weitling's system does not guarantee freedom either. I believe that a true system will be evolved by our new German philosophers."[2]

---

[1] See Chapter 6.

[2] *Der Bund der Kommunisten. Dokumente und Materialen*, Bd. 1. Berlin, 1970, S. 236.

Obviously, Schapper had in mind Marx and Engels who had made a trip to England and visited London in July and August 1845. There they had meetings with the leaders of London's community of the League of the Just—J. Moll, K. Schapper, H. Bauer—and discussed with them the main principles of the materialistic view of the world.

The activities of the League of the Just consisted predominantly in theoretical propaganda. This was attributable, on the one hand, to the as yet low level of capitalist relations and the proletarian movement in the German states and, on the other hand, to the propensity of the politically active German workers to theoretical studies, as was repeatedly pointed out by Marx.

In 1844 Germany became the scene of the first mass action of workers—the uprising of the Silesian weavers. In 1842-1844 there was a decline in the sales of cotton fabrics manufactured by the Silesian textile industry. At that time the Silesian weavers were village craftsmen supplied with yarn by merchants. In 1844 the weavers' earnings dropped while food prices (for rye flour, potatoes) soared. The Silesian weavers were worse off than the English workers. Habitual poverty, however, did not prod either of them to resolute actions; for that a drastic deterioration in the habitual level of poverty was necessary. This was exactly what happened in Silesia in the earlier half of 1844. "To appease their hunger with a piece of bread, weavers had to sell their beds, clothes, linen and furniture", wrote an official Berlin newspaper.[1] "Weavers are roaming the villages like ghosts", said another report in the bourgeois press.[2] Employers took advantage of unemployment to cut wages. Especially bitter hatred of the workers was aroused by the entrepreneurs Zwanziger in the village of Peterswaldau and the Dierig brothers in Langenbielau. In the most famished years for the workers Zwanziger built himself a palatial mansion, and the Dierig brothers also became noticeably richer. Besides, even among the merciless Silesian merchants Zwanziger was notorious for his greed and bad temper. He was the first to cut wages, he cruelly imposed fines, and bullied his workers. Widening production in the conditions of unemployment, he declared that he was prepared to employ a few hundred weavers more if they agreed to work for lower wages. The weavers clearly saw that the employers were getting richer while the workers were being impoverished; this direct and obvious relationship aroused their indignation. At the end of May the unrest at Peterswaldau reached a climax. The wrathful song *The Bloody Massacre* which had become a Marseillaise of the Silesian weavers could be heard more and more often. On June 3 a weaver who was singing it near Zwanziger's house was beaten up by

[1] *Berliner Polizei- und Criminal-Zeitung*, June 24, 1844.
[2] *Schlesische Zeitung*, February 22, 1844.

the latter's servants, and then arrested by the local police. On the next day, a group of workers called on the weavers to move on Zwanziger's house. A column of workers headed for the count's castle to call on the builders working there to join them.[1]

To act jointly, to unite all those interested in action regardless of the trade, to make the movement as well organised as possible—all these were features of the specifically proletarian class behaviour. The behaviour of the Chartist proletarians in the summer of 1842 was largely similar to it. The English workers also came to the places of work of their mates—to factories and workshops, wherever they could be found, and knocked on the windows of workers' hovels; they also gathered workers of different trades; they were also guided by groups of leaders who watched over the order and directed the workers to their goal. Scenes of class conflicts between the workers and the bourgeoisie in different countries revealed obvious common features. As soon as a conflict situation arose, columns of workers, frightening in their cohesion, immediately formed in England and Germany, and crowds of proletarians instantly gathered at assembly points in France. For all the difference in the scale of the movements and the degree of the immediate readiness of their members to resort to violence, these phenomena were of the same order.

The reaction of the powers that be, just as of official public opinion in different countries, confirmed this. It was also similar in general outline. A formidable and formerly unknown adversary appeared before "society". He was alien, although he could speak the language of "society", he was united, he was cemented by a force not less powerful than national or religious feelings—an awareness of belonging to those who sold their labour power, produced everything and owned nothing; he knew how to organise, and even his clothes, separating him from "society" at first glance, looked like the uniform of a hostile army. He appeared suddenly from a variety of places—hovels and cellars, giant factories and countless small workshops. It turned out that people living and working at these places could easily get together and understand one another. This adversary was angry and often changed over from requests to demands (and even his requests looked more like demands); he was unwilling to deal with that part of "society" which had heretofore spoken on his behalf, and which, appealing to "society" in their own interests, had pointed to the frightening and vague outline of the "barbarian" behind their backs. Moreover, his hatred was directed primarily against the capitalist factory owner, the manufacturer, the master.

The first and immediate emotional reaction of the ruling classes was terror. They were scared of the "new barbarians", they shud-

[1] For greater detail see: S. B. Kan, *Two Uprisings of Silesian Weavers. 1793-1844*, Moscow, 1948 (in Russian).

dered at the prospect of a revolution of the proletariat, of a forcible overthrow of the existing social system. The first and immediate practical reaction was brutal suppression.

This is illustrated by the events in Silesia in June 1844 and the actions of the employers in response to them.[1] On June 4, 1844, a column of workers approached Zwanziger's factory. Their deputation attempted to enter the office. They were met with a hail of stones. Then the workers burst into the office and started to burn papers. They destroyed in particular the office roster with entries on their debts to the factory owner. Zwanziger with his family fled.

Towards evening crowds of weavers from the neighbouring villages gathered at Peterswaldau. The weavers broke into Zwanziger's house and smashed up everything inside it. His warehouse was also destroyed. In the morning of June 5 the rioters headed for the enterprises of other hated owners. Frightened, the latter started distributing money and food to the workers. At noon troops entered Peterswaldau.

In the meantime, the workers marched in column formation on the village of Langenbielau (half a mile from Peterswaldau). They carried a white flag in front of the column. The Dierig brothers, expecting an attack, had knocked together a bunch of their minions. At the same time, they attempted to bribe the weavers coming from Peterswaldau, meeting them with a bag of small coins. The local pastor addressed the weavers with an admonition. The workers pushed the master's minions aside, beat up the priest and threw him into a stream, destroyed the factory building and Dierig's house. When an army unit arrived there was a clash between troops and the weavers. Eleven people were killed and 20 heavily wounded, of whom six died shortly. The troops, however, had to beat a retreat.

On the night of June 5 and during subsequent days troops were pulled into the area of the insurgent villages. Having secured an overwhelming superiority in numbers the authorities started to make mass arrests. On June 9 the weavers were compelled to return to work.

The Silesian events triggered off workers' riots in other parts of Germany and also in Austria. In June workers' disturbances took place in Breslau, Ingolstadt (Upper Bavaria), Berlin and Prague.

The uprising in Silesia was by no means only a "hunger riot", as is alleged by many bourgeois historians. The weavers of Peterswaldau and Langenbielau were workers in rebellion against the system of exploitation. They associated with Zwanziger the entire "damned camp of scoundrels", all those to whom they addressed their accusations and threats, all those who robbed the working man. The world

[1] For greater detail see: S. B. Kan, op. cit., pp. 288-316.

of oppression which opposed them and which they cursed in their song was the world of capitalist oppression.

This was not simply a rebellion against oppression but, in effect, an anti-capitalist rebellion. The workers had become aware of themselves as human beings living in the conditions of wage slavery and ruthlessly exploited. They vented their wrath primarily on the exploiters themselves and the relations of oppression fixed in office books rather than on material things. They had an inkling that the whole system of oppression was so constructed that even a "kind" factory owner had to act together with an "evil" one.

Much in this movement, of course, was of a spontaneous riot. It had no political character, and in this sense the Silesian weavers lagged behind the English Chartists and the Lyons insurgents of 1834. At the same time, the German labour movement had not known another equally conscious and massive action against capitalist exploitation. The Silesian weavers were not a tool of any propertied class; they upheld their own labour interests and in this respect were at the level reached by the English movement just two years before. That is why Marx and Engels regarded the uprising of the Silesian weavers as being of the same order as the actions of the Lyons proletariat and the Chartist movement. Each of these movements reflected, of course, the level of the social and political development of the proletariat in a given country and had its distinctive features.

In England this level had been reached in the course of a developed political struggle and the overcoming of the political dependence of the workers on the bourgeoisie craving for power; in Prussia it was the result of an outbr ak of non-political labour unrest with all the other classes remaining passive. Nevertheless, the Lyons and Silesian uprisings and Chartism expressed a common tendency towards the political independence of the European proletariat whose national contingents were in different formative stages.

CHARTISM—THE FIRST MASS PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

In 1831 the English bourgeoisie whose interests were infringed by the ruling aristocracy began wide agitation for a reform of the electoral system. It won over to its side workers and small owners facing ruin. Meetings and massive demonstrations were held throughout the country and sometimes grew into rebellions against the Tories.[1] At the same time, the revolutionary movement was growing in Ireland. In that situation the aristocracy agreed to a suffrage re-

[1] For greater detail see: A. L. Morton, and G. Tate, *The British Labour Movement 1770-1920*, London, 1956, pp. 59-66.

form. Under the act of 1832 the bourgeoisie was admitted to Parliament, and the number of voters was increased by 200,000. The concessions from the aristocracy delivered England from an impending revolution.[1]

The reform of 1832 did not grant suffrage to the workers. This opened their eyes to the behaviour of their ally and leader, the bourgeoisie, and showed graphically the selfish class character of its policy. The bourgeoisie opposed a further expansion of suffrage and freedom of the press for the workers, and in 1834 secured the adoption of a new law on the poor in Parliament. The former system of welfare allowances for the needy was abolished, and workhouses were made the main form of "aid" to the poor. Prison discipline, hunger, separation of families, monotonous and, at times, senseless work in workhouses were intended by the bourgeoisie to cause such terror of this "aid" that it would only remain for the workers to agree to any, even the lowest wages rather than be confined to this Bastille for the poor.

After the reform of 1832 the trade unions became more active: the workers were seeking ways of putting pressure on the bourgeoisie. In 1834 the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union was founded, which incorporated the large trade unions of building workers, spinners, potters, tailors, woolmen and farm labourers.[2]

Towards the end of 1834 the union had about half-a-million members. It organised strike struggles and, in addition, attempted to realise Owen's ideas of exchange bazaars and conversion of trade unions into producers' corporations.

The differences among the leaders of the union (Owen was accused of an authoritarian style of leadership; he for his part deemed it a mistake to impose the methods of class struggle on the union), persecution by the bourgeoisie alarmed by the growth of the strike movement and the socialist goals of the union, insufficient funds for support of the strikes—all led to an early disintegration of the organisation (1834).

The disillusionment with the reform bill, resentment over the new law on the poor, the setbacks for the trade unions and the failure of the attempts to implement Owen's projects prodded the workers more and more urgently to political struggle. A conviction was growing among them that only access to state power would ease their plight. Simultaneously, they were increasingly aware of the fact that the proletarians could achieve political rights only by independent action and, just as the individual capitalist is antagonistic to his workers, the bourgeoisie as a whole is antagonistic to the working class. Such conclusions were drawn both by the factory workers and

[1] See: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 294.
[2] For greater detail see: A. L. Morton and G. Tate, op. cit., p. 69.

the masses of ruined craftsmen and artisan workmen. Subjected to capitalist oppression in different forms and denied in equal measure any participation in the administration of state, they began to realise their common interests. The ruling classes themselves deepened the gulf separating the factory hands and artisan workmen from the propertied strata of civil society by their stubborn unwillingness to grant the workers the right of participation in the country's political life and by their ferocious anti-labour legislation (such as the new law on the poor).

The workers, the majority of the country's population, felt themselves social and political outcasts opposed to official England. Many of them were literate and intelligent people. Proletarians came to assimilate increasingly the Owenite conception of labour being the sole source of national wealth responsible for the multiple increase in the country's productive forces every decade, and the prosperity and luxury of the ruling classes being the result of exploitation and virtual plunder of the working people, the violation of their birth rights. The idea of birth rights had been brought into the midst of the workers by the democratic tradition ascending to the times of the French Revolution of the late 18th century; in the minds of the workers this idea merged with the concept of the old "English liberties". The workers felt they had been cruelly and meanly cheated by the bourgeoisie which in 1831-1832 had taken advantage of their aid so as to open its way towards power and use it against the workers themselves, and they already knew the great power of their united action. Appealing to them for aid in the struggle against the landlords the bourgeoisie thereby strengthened their faith in their own power.

As a result, after the mid-thirties the mass of the active English workers was characterised by the following distinctive qualities: a revolutionary determination to transform the social system oppressing them into a system serving their interests; confidence that only access to political power rather than trade union struggle or Owenite projects would help them implement this transformation; realisation that they could achieve liberation only with their own forces; and finally, realisation that the proletarians must be united. In other words, the workers strove for independent political action and the mid-thirties served as a landmark on the path of liberating the working class from bourgeois leadership.

In 1836 a group of skilled craftsmen set up the London Working Men's Association to work for universal suffrage. It was not a politically independent labour organisation. Its founders were petty-bourgeois democrats who expected that the association would collaborate with the radicals to win universal suffrage. Accordingly, the association operated in alliance with associations of the radical bourgeoisie (in particular, with the Birmingham Political Union). In

May 1838 the association leaders formulated the Charter, a programme document which provided for the institution of universal suffrage, the abolition of the property qualification for members of Parliament, its annual re-election, secret ballot, the equalisation of electoral districts, etc.

In 1837-1838 the workers established political organisations—the London Democratic Association led by George Julian Harney (1817-1897) and the Great Northern Union led by Feargus O'Connor (1794-1855). These proletarian associations took up the slogan of the Charter advanced by the petty-bourgeois democrats. This marked the beginning of Chartism.[1] It was born as a mass social protest movement, whose members were increasingly aware of its anti-bourgeois character. The history of Chartism is full of struggle against bourgeois radicals.

In 1838-1839 the Chartist movement began to receive an influx of industrial proletarians of the factory regions of England and Scotland, miners of Wales, low-paid sections of London workers and workmen of the declining manual trades. August 1838 saw the beginning of a broad discussion of the petition compiled in 1837, which the Chartist leaders intended to address to Parliament. Mammoth labour rallies in Manchester, Glasgow, Newcastle and many other cities discussed the draft of the petition and elected their representatives to the nationwide forum of Chartists—the Universal Convention of Industrial Classes. Towards the end of 1838, the movement had already been joined by hundreds of thousands of workers. The radicals, frightened by its scope and anti-bourgeois character, started to abandon the movement.

The popularity of the ideas of political and social emancipation, the main content of the mass Chartist movement, was rooted in the concrete class experience gained by the workers. The worker press, particularly the weekly *Northern Star* published since 1837 by O'Connor, had a great role to play in the dissemination and consolidation of these ideas. In the early forties the circulation of the *Star* ran to 10-12 thousand copies.

In February 1839, the first Chartist convention opened in London. In a situation of growing labour unrest and in view of the fact that representatives of the Chartist workers proclaimed their readiness to apply physical coercion to enforce the Charter, the bourgeois radicals walked out of the convention. The Chartists, however, had no definite plan of actions. When Parliament in July 1839 refused to discuss their petition (which had been signed by over 1,280,000 persons)

[1] For greater detail see: N. A. Yerofeyev, *The Chartist Movement*, Moscow, 1961; *Chartism*, Collected articles, Moscow, 1961 (both in Russian).

the convention did not dare to call a general strike. The uprising in Newport described above failed.

In July 1840 the National Charter Association—the first mass political organisation of the working class—was set up. The Chartist movement reached its heyday in 1842. The ideological and practical struggle of the Chartists in that period brought to the fore the main features of that great movement, which Lenin defined as preparation for Marxism in many respects, as "the last word but one" before Marxism, as "the first broad, truly mass and politically organised proletarian revolutionary movement".[1]

The heroism and revolutionary enthusiasm of the English workers, their irreconcilable hatred of their oppressors, the tireless activity of their leaders who had risen from the midst of the workers and were infinitely devoted to the cause of the proletariat, the difficult quests for ways towards liberation—quests that were full of mistakes but, for all that, had historic importance, the movement and initiative of the masses awakened to political life—all these features became manifest especially forcefully in 1842. Chartism then assumed the form of an open rebellion of the working class against the existing system.

A general description of the living conditions of the English workers in the earlier half of the forties is presented in the remarkable study of the young Engels entitled *The Condition of the Working Class in England.* In 1842, an economic depression aggravated the plight of the workers. In that period the working class districts of the industrial cities of England were a dismal sight of appalling poverty, privations, and hunger. Thousands of textile and metal workers, building workers and miners wandered in crowds asking for alms for themselves and their children. Hundreds starved to death on the streets; others ate carrion and boiled nettle. Many working-class families abandoned their dwellings, unable to pay their rent, while others left the country for good. Jobless often committed crimes to find a sanctuary in jail. Workers who had managed to keep their jobs brought home a pittance after many hours of exhausting labour. The working class of England suffered intolerable hardships and starved like the people of a besieged city.

All this could not but lead to a massive protest action of the working class against the "damned factory system", which oppressed both the factory proletarians and the handicraftsmen, against a social system based on oppression and cruelty.

In early 1842, under the direct impact of the growing proletarian movement for the Charter and in protest against the policy of Robert

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The Third International and Its Place in History", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 309; "On Compromises", Vol. 30, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 492.

Peel's Tory government towards preserving the grain laws that contradicted the interests of the factory owners (bread price increases prevented employers from cutting wages) a considerable proportion of the bourgeoisie favouring free trade came out in support of the demands formulated in the Charter. After Parliament declined to repeal the grain laws all demands in the Charter or some of them gained vocal support from free traders of Salford, Rochdale, Leicester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Coventry, Bolton, Wolverhampton, Manchester, and London. The bourgeois free traders gave broad support to the movement organised by the radical Joseph Sturge, which proclaimed "complete suffrage" as its ultimate goal. The free traders expected to get powerful support from the workers in the struggle against the grain laws, to achieve their repeal and then—resorting to a timetested method—to betray their recent ally, abandoning the demand for universal suffrage. This tactics of the free traders was to deal a blow at the Chartist movement by undermining its influence withinthe masses.

The Chartists, however, did not agree to an alliance with the free trade bourgeoisie. They realised that action against the grain laws undertaken jointly with the free traders would mean in fact subordination of the Chartist movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie. The experience of past years had taught the workers to discern behind its every step cool political calculation dictated by its selfish class motives. The false advocacy of universal suffrage by the free traders failed to bring the results they had expected.

Even where the bourgeois had initially achieved some success, the workers eventually took up a firm stand and refused to be a tool in the hands of the free traders. In April a conference of champions of "complete suffrage" headed by Sturge was held in Birmingham. Simultaneously, a Chartist conference met in the city and expressed its distrust of the bourgeois radicals. Under pressure from the Chartists, the followers of Sturge were compelled to support all the demands in the Charter. This manoeuvre, however, by no means justified the hopes of the free traders. The Chartists distrusted the factory owners and merchants so suddenly converted to the Chartist faith and pointed that the followers of Sturge, far from having joined the National Charter Association, set up their own organisation and refused to come out under the slogan of the Charter.

An important pointer to the increased influence of Chartism was the growth in the membership of the National Charter Association: 16,000 members in October 1841, 30,000 in December 1841, 40,000 in February 1842, and more than 50,000 in August of the same year. What is more, as its Executive Council wrote at the time, "we have attached to our Association many thousands who, as yet, have not taken out their cards, but who on every occasion, where a demonstration of strength is necessary, muster in such overwhelming num-

bers as to outvote the expediency-mongers in their own strongholds".[1] Indeed, the Charter received support from numerous workers' meetings and gatherings (up to 600 a week, as evidenced by the Executive Council Chairman, the weaver James Leach), among whose participants Association members were relatively few.

The doors to the Association were open to every supporter of the Charter; he was a member of the Association when and inasmuch as he practically participated in its activities. The first mass organisation of the proletariat could not have been of a different character, because the Chartists themselves believed that it should unite the entire working class and its expansion should be the main content of its work. They saw their task in achieving the widest possible association of supporters throughout the country.

The formation and activities of the National Charter Association were an important contribution to the struggle of the English workers for their class independence. For the first time in history masses of workers gave a political form to their common class interests and came out united in an independent political organisation—a prototype of the working-class party. And no matter how "infantile" the character of that first truly mass organisation of the proletariat, however far it might have been from a truly revolutionary party, the one that leads the working class to victory, the formation of the Association was a long step forward in the history of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The increased influence of Chartism was also attested by the massive support for the second National Petition (1842) which gathered 3,317,752 signatures. The march on Parliament on May 2 to submit the second petition demanding the implementation of the Charter brought together, according to the *Times*, 50,000 persons, while the Chartist newspaper *Northern Star* believed that the actual figure was ten times greater.

In 1842 the influence of the Chartists on the trade unions markedly increased. Many of them joined the National Charter Association. The trade unions of bricklayers, fustian-cutters, spinners, smiths, house-painters and boilermakers of Manchester joined it in June. The secretary of the Association's Executive Council, John Campbell, expressed his confidence that within six months the whole of the Manchester trades would be with the Association.[2]

The influence of Chartism grow rapidly almost exclusively in the country's industrial districts. It was strongest in Lancashire and Western Yorkshire, i.e., in areas of factory production. The trade unions of Manchester which had joined the Association in the sum-

[1] *The Northern Star*, February 19, 1842, p. 5.
[2] *The Northern Star*, June 11, 1842, p. 7.

mer were mainly associations of factory hands. The Chartist movement also heavily relied on hand-loom weavers, knitters, hosiers, etc. They provided mass support for Chartism in a number of regions—Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire.

The activities of propagandists of Chartism largely contributed to the increase in its popularity. Enormous work in disseminating Chartist ideas among the workers was carried out by lecturers of the Association, who were at the same time organisers of the movement. Christopher Doyle, James West and William Jones in Yorkshire, Cockburn in Newcastle, Williams in Durham and Sunderland, John Leach in Lancashire, G. J. Harney, Jonathan Bairstow, Thomas Cooper and A. Taylor in the central counties, John Mason and George White in Birmingham, Joseph Linney in Bilston, T. Wheeler, Ruffy Ridley and Stallwood in London, Mogg in Shropshire—these are but a few of the long list of talented Chartist orators who were popular among the workers at that time. Workers who had gathered to hear a Chartist speaker were not only listeners: once a lecture was over they often started a discussion and passed resolutions expressing their attitudes on the ideas discussed. The subjects of lectures Chartists read to the workers were quite varied. They talked of the principles of the Charter, the causes of the disastrous situation in the country, the distribution of property in land, of "nature and the consequences of class legislation", the new law on the poor, the monarchy and the republic, a permanent army, the horrors of the factory system. No matter what social phenomenon was under examination, however, the Charter was invariably brought to the forefront.

The general strike in August 1842 was the climax of the Chartist movement.

In the summer of 1842, witnessing the workers' determined efforts to uphold their political independence and the Charter, the capitalist free traders decided to resort to economic coercion. They insistently called on the workers to rise in arms for the abolition of the grain laws, intending to stir a rebellion by closing down factories and throwing hundreds of thousands of working people out of jobs.

On August 8, the strike in the area of Ashton-Hyde-Stalybridge (Lancashire) which had broken out a few days before assumed wide scope. At first, the strikers, mostly Chartists, demanded, as a rule, only fair wages. Lancashire factory owners, with rare exceptions, offered no resistance to the strikers. They expected to derive political advantages, turning the strike into an action against the grain laws. The very reduction in wages which served as the immediate cause of the strike in the Ashton-Hyde-Stalybridge area had been conceived as a provocation and carried out in an improving economic situation. Factory owners presided over workers' meetings and called them to a rebellion. When on August 9 the strikers assembled at Ashton

and headed for Manchester, the bourgeois members of the municipal council let them into the city.

On August 10, the strike in Manchester turned into a general strike. There were clashes between workers and police. Troops reinforcements started arriving in Manchester. On August 11 numerous gatherings of representatives of the areas hit by the strike voted for turning it into an action under the slogan of the Charter.

Between August 9 and 16 the strike spread to Lancashire, part of Cheshire and Western Yorkshire. Clashes between workers and police supported by regular army units became increasingly frequent and bloody. A vast area forming England's industrial heart was in effect in the state of a civil war. The boundaries of the area of total involvement in the strike coincided with almost absolute accuracy with the boundaries of the factory districts. The strikers were joined by the hosiers and glove-makers of Leicestershire and the miners of Wales. Far in the north a strike continued unabated in the mining areas of Scotland.

In most cities of Lancashire and Western Yorkshire and in Northern Staffordshire the strikers advanced the slogan "The Charter and Fair Wages". At some places they set up workers' committees which controlled the actions of the factory owners and issued in isolated cases licenses for partial resumption of production. On August 16, the strike continued to spread in Western Yorkshire and, meeting with stiffening resistance from the bourgeoisie, was approaching the eastern boundary of the factory districts. That was the culminating point of the movement.

The provocations of the factory owners by themselves could not have caused a strike on such a large scale. This was a long overdue action of broad masses of the proletariat against a social system which doomed the workers to the torture of hunger. Therefore, it flared up more or less simultaneously in many industrial centres. The marches of strikers from one city to another characteristic of the events of 1842 were not undertaken to compel the workers to join the strike. Strikes often started even before the arrival of columns of workers from other cities. As a rule, the marchers left the city within a few hours of arrival, and local workers headed for a neighbouring region. The tactics of the strikers was attributable to their desire to pool forces and come out jointly: it was directly linked with the general character of the movement. The strikers regarded their struggle not only as the cause of the workers of a given factory, city or district, but also as the cause of all the workers. At that stage, the bourgeois no longer provoked strikes, as a rule, and whenever they did not resist the workers that was only until the appearance of troops and police. Having received reinforcements, they ruthlessly suppressed the strikers.

Hundreds of thousands of proletarians who had taken part in the strike had advanced demands of a social character epitomised in the slogan of fair wages. This slogan included demands for a wage raise, the institution of uniform pay rates for the same type of output at all enterprises, guarantees of their continuance in the future, and a shortening of the working day. But more than that, by advancing this slogan the workers announced their intention to get a fair share of the benefits deriving from the application of machines.

In other words, the content the workers imparted to their demand for a fair wage could be realised in effect only through profound changes in the property relations. Behind the slogan of a fair wage the capitalist seemed to see the terrifying spectre of expropriation—and with good reason. This slogan meant a demand for remaking the social system in the interest of the working class, that is, the very same demand the implementation of which was proclaimed by the Chartists as the ultimate goal of their struggle.[1] In the prevailing situation, in the eyes of the workers the Charter was the only means of radically remaking the social system and establishing a new one, based on the principle of a fair wage. Therefore, the action of the proletariat against the mainstays of capitalist society was bound inevitably to assume a Chartist character.

The strike grew into a vast Chartist demonstration as it assumed a massive and general character. This was expressed most strikingly in the decisions of the Greater Conference held on August 15-16 in Manchester. Representatives of the strikers and the trade unions assembled here. The overwhelming majority of the conferees were in favour of continuing the strike until the victory of the Charter.

To understand the meaning of the stormy events of that period one should take into account the situation prevailing at that time: the unprecedented scope of the movement; formidable crowds of workers bringing factories to a halt; police losing control of the situation, and dozens of police stations smashed up in raids; regiments of the regular army rushing from factory to factory, from city to city in an attempt to stop the workers; the panic that seized the bourgeoisie; the rumours of the revolutionary ferment on the Continent, the depreciation of securities, the intention of the government to make concessions, the refusal of troops to fire on the people; and factories and mines of a vast industrial region deserted.

On August 16-17 the conference attempted to take the lead in the movement. Its appeal, however, had no practical significance. The conference met at a time when the strikers had in fact suffered a de-

[1] This demand was expressed in a vague form; it could not have been different, because the Chartists had but a vague vision of transformation of the social system (see, for example, F. O'Connor, *The Employer and Employed. The Chamber's Philosophy Refuted*, London, 1844, pp. 7-9).

feat: as soon as the strike had become general, it transpired that they did not know what way to pursue further, while hunger was compelling them to return to work. The delegates called on the workers to keep the movement within the bounds of "law and order" and did nothing to practically give the lead to the strike. What is more, part of the delegates were scared by the fact that the workers in their actions had gone beyond the "constitutional" limits; these delegates were in favour of ending the strike.

By that time, the bourgeois municipalities aided by the regular army had taken control of the situation in the largest industrial centres. After August 20, only isolated pockets of the strike movement were still surviving. The ruling classes brutally punished the strikers; thousands of workers were thrown into jail or exiled to colonies. Many leading Chartists were arrested and put on trial.

For all the contradictions in the behaviour of the participants in the general strike in August 1842 it may be described as a proletarian rebellion against the capitalist system. The world had not yet known a revolutionary action of the working class equal to it for its scale and degree of awareness of the class goals. In 1842 there occurred the most resolute dissociation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie. Engels wrote: "Chartism was purely a working-men's cause freed from all bourgeois elements."[1] The specifically proletarian content of the slogan of universal suffrage became clearly revealed in England. This content at the time was social revolution.

Thenceforth the class struggle of the proletariat entered a stage where the absence of scientific socialism was a direct obstacle to its further progressive development. On the other hand, the appearance of developed forms of the class struggle of the proletariat was one of the main prerequisites for evolving scientific socialism.

The defeat of 1842 was followed by a decline in the mass Chartist movement. The most salient features of this decline were as follows: the inability of the leaders of Chartism to take advantage of the revolutionary tension of 1842; the deep-going internal contradictions of the Chartist ideology and tactics (the gravitation of the Chartist proletarians towards class independence—and non-class illusions, the revolutionary character of the struggle—and faith in the "law in general"). An important role was played by the industrial and commercial boom of 1843-1845, which somewhat improved the position of the workers.

After its political defeat the vague social aspirations of Chartism, which had earlier been in the background and overshadowed by the proletarian revolutionary practical action, began to assume concrete features. Since mass Chartism had not time enough to merge with the

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 523.

emerging scientific socialism, its features could only be Utopian. The followers of O'Connor, who held the leading positions in the Chartist movement, attempted to implement his plan of buying up land with funds raised among the workers and setting up a network of small farms. O'Connor deemed it possible to return millions of workers to the land. For about five years the National Charter Association campaigned for the land project and practical measures associated with it. In 1848 the National Land Company founded by O'Connor went bankrupt. Petty-bourgeois socialism was naturally unable to oppose the rapid development of capitalist relations.

In those years G. Harney and E. Jones, outstanding representatives of the left wing of Chartism, turned their attention to scientific socialism. In the autumn of 1843 F. Engels had a meeting at Leeds with Harney, who was editor of the *Northern Star* at the time. Harney and his followers maintained ties with the London community of the Union of the Just. In August 1845, when Marx and Engels came to London, they met leaders of the left wing of Chartism. In September 1845 an international revolutionary democratic organisation, the Fraternal Democrats, was founded in London; it included representatives of Harney's group, the Union of the Just, the French, Italian, Spanish, and Polish democratic emigrés.

Marx and Engels established regular ties with Harney, who was active in the Fraternal Democrats. On Engels' suggestion, Harney became a correspondent of the Brussels Communist Committee.[1] Addressing Harney with this proposal, Engels wrote that he considered him a true internationalist, revolutionary, atheist, republican, and Communist.[2] The Chartist movement, however, was no longer as united as in 1842, when the differences between the radical group of Harney and the followers of the more cautious O'Connor, who were swept up by the revolutionary wave of that time, had receded to the background. Harney now represented only a small group of the most consistent and determined Chartists; most of them had remained with O'Connor. The mass Chartist movement was not ready to embrace the ideas of Marxism.

Chartism was a kind of a prologue to the later history of the international working-class movement, a prologue in which much of what was to unfold in the course of the subsequent class battles of the proletariat became manifest on the national scene and in condensed form. It made progress from subordination to the bourgeoisie to political independence, from the economic struggle and plans of social transformation based on class peace to political and social revolu-

---

[1] See Chapter 6.

[2] See about this: V. E. Kunina, *Marx and the English Labour Movement*, Moscow, 1968, p. 25 (in Russian).

tion, from scattered actions and organisations to a powerful movement on a national scale and to a united organisation. Even the "infantile disorder" of leftism was not alien to Chartism; presuming that victory was near at hand, the Chartists in the early forties rejected any compromise with the radical faction of the bourgeoisie. A democratic aspiration for unity with the proletarians of other countries was also characteristic of them. Nevertheless, it was but a prologue—the class independence, political revolutionary spirit, united organisation, democratic internationalist aspirations were expressed in Chartism in their primary, immature form. The great "prologue", which had taken place in the most developed capitalist country, was followed by an action of world historic importance—the complex, long-lasting and on the whole progressive development of the national contingents of the emerging working-class movement; the genuine political independence of the proletariat began to take form, now on a scientific foundation.

Chartism won a great achievement for the working class—the legislative institution of a 10-hour working day in June 1847 (technically it applied to teenagers and women but in fact was extended to all factory hands). This set a historic precedent: it was for the first time that the working class had wrested such a great concession from the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the law of 1847 was a landmark in the social tactics of the bourgeoisie. It had already had to agree to compromises at certain times (the law of 1824). Now the bourgeoisie had become convinced more firmly than ever before that the struggle of the workers could force it to make considerable concessions in the sphere of relations between labour and capital, that the violation of the "freedom of industry" imposed by the workers by no means was tantamount to a collapse of the capitalist system and, what is more, that an appropriate concession could be used as a means of preserving it. By that time the bourgeoisie had accumulated material resources for manoeuvring—England had turned into "the workshop of the world", occupying a monopoly position on the world market; the colonial superprofits were flowing into the country in an ever widening stream.

With the Chartist wave ebbing away the stratum of trade unionism became exposed and started to consolidate in the English labour movement. Can this be described as a step backwards? By no means. Having returned to trade unionism, the labour movement found itself not at the initial point of its mass development but at a new, historically higher stage as compared with the pre-Chartist period. After the Chartist prologue the English bourgeoisie was faced by an incomparably stronger and better organised working class.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE UNITED STATES

The socio-economic and political conditions in which the labour movement took shape in the United States differed from those in Europe. At the same time, the general laws of class struggle increasingly came into play here just as in other capitalist countries.

The history of American capitalism in the new times—contrary to the allegations of bourgeois apologists and opportunist ideologues of various kinds about some "exclusiveness" of social relations in the United States—was characterised by an exacerbation of social contradictions. Life showed the futility of the hopes of the employers for a mitigation of the class antagonisms, the illusions that such phenomena as labour struggle, the formation and consolidation of labour organisations would bypass the United States.

In 1832 the newly founded New England Workingmen's Association launched a campaign for a 10-hour working day. Its leaders sought to set up a united organisation of skilled and unskilled workers. One of the Association's leaders, Seth Luther, addressed a message to the workers of New England, which protested against the development in the United States of a factory system similar to England's and called for making the achievements of the revolution benefit the workers. Luther's arguments against the factory system and his thesis on the senselessness of the Declaration of Independence as long as no changes were made in the interest of the working people closely resembled Chartist arguments, one essential difference being, however, that they were not crowned by a slogan of universal suffrage as a means of winning political power by the workers (as had been the case in England). The political system in the United States was on the whole already close to the realisation of this slogan but, nevertheless, remained bourgeois.

In 1835, as a result of a general strike the labour unions of Philadelphia compelled the city authorities to enact a 10-hour working day; this stirred an upsurge of the strike movement throughout the country, but it took a few more decades for the 10-hour working day to become a secure gain of the US proletariat.[1] What the workers of England had arrived at as a result of the political revolutionary struggle which had engulfed the trade unions for a decade and a half was achieved by the US proletarians—if only partially—on the path of trade unionism and the related political activity.

[1] The first law on a 10-hour working day was adopted by the legislature of New Hampshire in 1847; a year later similar laws were passed in Maine and Pennsylvania. A 10-hour working day became standard for the workers in most states in the early 1860s. For greater detail on the labour movement in the United States see: Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Vol. I, International Publishers, New York, 1962, Ch. VII, IX, XII.

In 1828 the first political working men's party was founded in Philadelphia; during the next six years such parties appeared in more than sixty cities. The proletarians, who were members of these local parties of the late twenties and the earlier half of the thirties had on the whole similar aspirations. They came out for measures to benefit the working people, in particular, for a 10-hour working day, the establishment of a network of schools for children of working-class families, the abolition of compulsory service in the militia, the abolition of imprisonment of insolvent debtors, the payment of wages in hard cash, the introduction of income tax. Many workers, who were members of these parties, upheld the idea of profit distribution more advantageous to the working people. Having emerged from the trade union movement, the working men's parties went further than the latter, but for all that their demands were of a reformist-democratic rather than revolutionary-socialist character.

In Philadelphia, the founding of the working men's party was initiated by the city labour union association. In connection with a discussion on the ways and means to win a 10-hour working day, the unions of shoe-makers, hatters and carpenters resolved to nominate their independent candidates in the forthcoming elections to the municipal council and the state legislature. In the autumn of 1829, twenty labour candidates, who had received support from the bourgeois democrats and the Federalists, were indeed elected.

In New York in 1829 the Working Men's Party was also formed in the course of the struggle for a 10-hour working day. The Committee of Fifty elected by the labour unions drafted a list of worker candidates for the forthcoming autumn elections to the state legislature. In the elections to the state senate, however, the party resolved to ally itself with political organisations of the bourgeoisie. One of the founders of the Working Men's Party of New York was Thomas Skidmore (d. 1832), a socialist worker who advocated political activity for fair distribution of property, nationalisation of the land, and the establishment of a system of the small farmer's land tenure. The party was joined by the Socialists R. D. Owen and Frances Wright. Both of them saw a way towards the liberation of the people in setting up a system of universal education.

In the elections of 1829 the workers' ticket gained 28 per cent of the vote, and their candidates were elected. This first and partial victory of the workers caused grave concern of the bourgeois, who suddenly saw in universal suffrage a threat to the exsitence of property. In the same year, however, the Working Men's Party split up: the labour unionists had refused to accept Skidmore's agrarian socialism as the basis of the activities of the party they had founded. Skidmore attempted to form a separate Poor Men's Party, but it failed to win any appreciable support within the masses. Before

long the Working Men's Party fell into the hands of a group of politicians, which contested the elections jointly with the democrats. The tickets advanced by the Owenites and Skidmore were defeated. The Skidmore group broke up, while other factions joined the democrats.

The working men's parties were short-lived. After their disintegration the politically active proletarians usually supported the radical wing of the Democratic Party. They sided with President Andrew Jackson by supporting his policy of curbing the monopoly rights of the Bank of the United States.[1] The workers were in the vanguard of the democratic struggle against the privileges of the commercial and financial aristocracy. Within the framework of the Democratic Party the workers in 1834 set up a General Committee, which made its support for this party conditional on the nomination of Congressional candidates exclusively from among opponents of the privileges.

However, acute contradictions between the proletarians and the bourgeois democrats soon came to light. The workers organised in labour unions opposed the intention of the New York Democrats to elect to Congress candidates linked with banking capital. They also resented the suppression of strikes and the limitation of the rights of the unions by the Democratic Administration. Therefore, in the thirties the proletarians again moved for political separation from their allies. In 1836 the workers of New York jointly with farmers founded the Equal Rights Party, which nominated independent candidates for state governor and vice-governor and demanded a legislative guarantee for the rights of the labour unions.

The upsurge in the political activity of the workers in the thirties induced the Democratic Party, which was in power at the time, to implement some progressive reforms: to restrict the influence of the banking oligarchy, abolish imprisonment of insolvent debtors and compulsory service in the militia forces, and to introduce a 10-hour working day at government enterprises (without a reduction in wages). In 1842 the Supreme Judicial Court of the State of Massachusetts handed down a verdict formally recognising the right of working men to organise and to hold such strikes that would help maintain closed shop and some other requirements. This ruling set a legal precedent; it became in a sense an obstacle to the bourgeoisie in its attempts to suppress the labour movement by means of prosecution. The Act of 1842 was a great achievement for the workers, a direct result of their political activity and organisation.

In 1836 the workers' movement for a land reform came on the scene. Its ideologist George Henry Evans called for the workers to be given access to free public land in the West. In his opinion, the re-

[1] Philip S. Foner, op. cit., p. 144.

sult would be that part of the workers would become independent farmer craftsmen, while the wages of the workers remaining in the East would rise. The advocates of a land reform attached great importance to the political activity of the workers in the belief that their demands should be met through legislation. As a programme of solving the social problem in the interest of the workers Evans' Plan was a petty-bourgeois Utopia: lacking money and means of production and long divorced from the land, the masses of workers in the Eastern states had no prospects as independent farmers. Besides, Evans presumed that his reform (labour land tenure) would create conditions under which the way to the development of capitalism in the West would be barred. Evans' Plan, however, also had real positive significance for the development of the class self-awareness of the proletariat, because it oriented the workers on political struggle. This movement was one of the factors which induced the government of the Democratic President Andrew Jackson to initiate legislation which contributed to the spread of farmers' squatting and thereby to the territorial expansion of American capitalism.

It follows from all this that the bourgeois-democratic transformations implemented in the period under review were largely due to the labour movement, primarily the struggle of the workers of New England, just as the workers and the craftsmen of the Mid-Atlantic states, the activity of the first labour parties and labour unions.

The processes which occurred within the working class and the labour movement of the United States in the earlier half of the 19th century were, in their most common tendencies, similar to those taking place in Western Europe. The workers fought to widen the freedom of association and set up trade unions (in spite of the opposition from the bourgeoisie and the state). From their own experience the proletarians gradually arrived at the conclusion that political struggle was needed to change and improve their social position; at the same time they became increasingly convinced that the political rights by themselves would not deliver them from social slavery.

Nevertheless, the development of the labour movement in the United States had its specific distinctions. For a long time the main form of the activity of the American proletariat was the labour union coming out for an improvement of the economic position and for the rights of the workers within the framework of bourgeois legality. The influence of representatives of the revolutionary trend in the US labour movement was still weak. This was largely determined by the following circumstances. The people of the United States won bourgeois-democratic freedoms along with political independence. They were naturally of a limited character and combined with the cruel slavery of the black population of the South and the powerful political influence of the plantation owners. At that time, however,

the social antagonism between the workers and the bourgeoisie was not yet expressed in such a bitter political confrontation as in the European countries where the emerging proletariat was deprived of the elementary political rights, including suffrage. In the United States the latter had not become a monopoly of the rich. As a result, the formal possession of certain rights of a bourgeois-democratic character generated in part of the working people the illusions of a possibility of a radical improvement in the existing system through reforms, without encroaching on its foundations. Therefore, the social discontent of the American proletarians was expressed mainly in protest against the "vices" of capitalism. The main method of political action of the workers was electioneering (before local, Congressional and Presidential elections).

Hence the definite moderation in the programmes of the labour parties in the United States in the twenties and thirties and the wider opportunities for the trade union movement and the lesser tension of political relations with the bourgeoisie. Hence the absence of the awareness, characteristic of the front-ranking European workers, that it was the duty of the proletariat to solve the cardinal democratic tasks. That was why the working men's parties in the United States were mainly reformist political organisations. Their emergence meant, of course, that the workers of New York, Philadelphia, and other cities were willing to pursue an independent class policy, but only within the framework of reformism. This was a perennial source of deep-seated internal contradictions: in the conditions of the United States of the earlier half of the 19th century, it largely contributed to the early disappearance of the local working men's parties from the political scene, although it was here that they had been founded for the first time in the history of the world proletariat.[1]

The development of the American labour movement in the period under review was also retarded by another factor—the continued black slavery. Since the 1830s and 1840s the progressive workers (in particular, the factory workers of New England) had been increasingly active in their opposition to slavery.[2] As Marx pointed out, however, "in the United States of North America, every independent movement of the workers was paralysed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic."[3] The attitude of part of the workers to the problem of abolition of slavery was either indifferent or even hostile; they feared lest emancipation of the blacks should result in an influx of cheap labour to the labour market. Thus, the attitude to slavery generated differences among the workers, which in turn prevented

[1] William Z. Foster, *Outline History of the World Trade Union Movement*, International Publishers, New York, 1956, p. 49.
[2] For greater detail see: Philip S. Foner. *History...*, op. cit., p. 266.
[3] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 284.

the American proletariat from gaining a clear understanding of its genuine, class interests, and from realising the need for revolutionary political struggle.

Nevertheless, despite the above-noted distinctions in the US labour movement in the 1830s and 1840s, its ideological and political immaturity, it was precisely the country's working class making up the left flank of the democratic camp, that came forward with a programme of the most radical reforms in various spheres of economic and socio-political life and achieved the satisfaction of some of its demands, thereby paving the road for the further development of the class struggle.

THE SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE PRE-MARXIAN PERIOD

The supreme ideological achievements of the progressive proletarians in the pre-Marxian period were Utopian workers' communism in France and Germany and revolutionary Chartism in England. The different schools and trends of this proletarian revolutionary part of critical Utopian socialism had an important role to play in the struggle of the proletarians for political independence. The concepts and systems of views of the most remarkable representatives of this current of socialist thought are an essential component of the history of this struggle.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE UTOPIAN COMMUNISTS

ÉTIENNE CABET AND THÉODORE DÉZAMY

Cabetism was the most popular communistic system in the midst of the workers in France in the 1840s. Étienne Cabet (1788-1856) went down in history as a champion of "non-violent communism". However, was his propaganda equivalent to advocacy of "class peace"? Were his views a step forward in the development of the class consciousness of the workers or were they a step back?

Cabet's pivotal ideas are presented in his main work *Voyage en Icarie* (1840), in which he painted a picture of an ideal communist society and attempted to show the way to achieve it.

The social system existing in communist Icaria was born, as Cabet underscores, of a revolution. It differs from the revolution of 1830 in France in that it has been carried to the end in the interest of the people and by the people themselves. A general uprising took place under the leadership of the people's hero Icarus. Proclaimed a dictator, he laid the groundwork for such transformations that have led to the establishment of a democratic republic, social and political equality, the institution of common property, and the formation of

a communist system. Genuine democracy is possible only under communism.

According to Cabet, all earlier world history was a complex process of the development of democracy and equality, which borrowed strength even from their defeats. Revolutions of the past, such as the English Revolution, failed to establish these principles by no means because they were violent, but merely because, if one has England in mind, "Cromwell was not an Icarus". Cabet regards the execution of Charles I and Louis XVI as a deserved punishment: both acts contributed to a gigantic growth of social consciousness. In Cabet's opinion, the revolutionary Convention in France made a tremendous step forward towards the triumph of equality and democracy; its terror was a measure of self-defence of the revolution against the internal and foreign counter-revolution. Rejecting violence, a crime when unnecessary, Cabet flatly refused to denounce the Convention in its entirety or its "terrible dictatorship".

From Cabet's viewpoint, the Babeuf conspiracy demonstrated the tremendous progress democracy had made towards community since 1789. Cabet regarded Babeuf as a like-minded comrade and predecessor; he felt profound respect for the courage of Babeuf and his followers, but his attitude towards them was by no means simple. He supposed that the Babouvists had fallen victim to a "fatal delusion which made them believe that it was possible to establish securely a regime of community with the aid of violence"; their conspiracy had frightened the bourgeois and the aristocracy and thrown them into Napoleon's embrace. Cabet was convinced that the principle of community could not be securely introduced by forcible means. At the same time, Cabet did not denounce the Babouvists for their advocacy of violence: revolution, violence and terror against the powers that be did not deserve denunciation, because the gravitation of revolutionaries towards violence was caused by the vices of the social system; revolutions were a response to violence unleashed by the oppressors.

The contradictions in Cabet's views on the significance of violence in remaking society were due to his attempt to combine within a common system of views an idealistic concept of the natural and peaceful dissemination of the idea of community, on the one hand, and the conclusions following from a concrete historical analysis, on the other. In Cabet's opinion, the idea of community corresponds to the interests not only of the poor but also of the rich—the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. In principle, therefore, it can be realised by peaceful means. Experience shows, however, that the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie oppose this in every way. Cabet fails to find a clear way out of the incompatibility of what he regards as the immanent capacity of the ideas of equality and community to get support from all strata of society and the need—confirmed by history—for the

oppressed constantly to wage a struggle and revolt against their oppressors in the name of this idea. He continues to place all his hopes on the peaceful spread of Enlightenment and the triumph of reason. It is significant, however, that the only country where the idea of community has won achieved this victory, according to Cabet, through a popular uprising and a violent revolution; then the magnanimous Icarus, after the triumph of the revolution, supported by the armed people, puts an end to violence; this is the pivot of Cabet's arguments on force and violence, while the panorama of an armed uprising of the masses he paints is the most vivid and artistically most appealing part of the book. In addition, his expressive description of the inequitable social system, the sufferings of the oppressed, recognition of their strength, and his indignation over the political conduct of the propertied classes appropriating not only the labour of the impoverished but also the fruits of their struggle for equality and justice were all of revolutionary significance. Thus, the peaceful Icarian appeal objectively had a revolutionary undertone too. Cabet addressed himself above all to the working and expoloited people regarding them as the most receptive to the ideas of communism and convinced that the development of industry creating powerful productive forces and multiplying the numbers of working people brings communism nearer.

Like many other labour leaders of that period Cabet had already realised that the bourgeois sought to use the struggle of the proletariat for its emancipation exclusively in their interest (like most worker Communists he reckoned, in fact, all working people among the proletarians). Cabet feared new deceptions and, pointing to the treacherous designs of the bourgeoisie, he, therefore, advocated independent political action by the working people. At the same time, he did not deny the possibility of their actions in alliance with the democratic wing of the bourgeoisie.

Cabet played an appreciable role in the political enlightenment of the workers. He was among that galaxy of communists and educators to which the proletariat of the pre-Marxian period owed its initial training. Respect for the working people; recognition of the industrial progress as a major factor that could contribute to communist transformation; the attitude to the cause of the working people as the cause of the whole mankind (which did not yet amount, of course, to an understanding of the historic mission of the proletariat, but was by no means equivalent to the idea of unity of all social classes, i.e., a class peace); convincing and vivid propaganda of the economic, political and moral advantages of the system of community; merciless exposure of the ulcers of the system of exploitation; a wide and picturesque panorama of future society instead of the rigid outlines of the former communist Utopias; an attempt made by means of an

encyclopaedic review to bring the achievements of mankind's best minds within reach of the working people; amazing historical optimism, profound confidence in the eventual triumph of the ideas of community—all these characteristic traits of Cabet's system of views exerted a great favourable influence on the process of the political self-awareness of the French workers.

Marx described Cabet as a man "to be respected for his practical attitude towards the French proletariat."[1]

In 1888 Engels classed Cabet's doctrine with the category of workers' communism and placed it on a par with the revolutionary theoretical achievements of Weitling, clearly differentiating both of them from the advocates of Utopian schemes outside the labour movement seeking support primarily from the "educated classes".[2] Closely following the activities of Cabet and the Cabetists in the period of their greatest popularity among the workers, Engels wrote in 1843: "Even the Icarians, though they declare in their publications that they abhor physical revolutions and secret societies, even they are associated in this manner, and would gladly seize upon any opportunity to establish a republic by force."[3]

Another prominent representative of French Utopian communism was Théodore Dézamy (1803-1850). A follower of the 18th-century materialists, he remained an idealist in his interpretation of social relations in the belief that society should be reorganised in accordance with the eternal and immutable laws of reason and human nature. It was from this point of view that Dézamy considered the community of property.

In his Utopian scheme mankind is an aggregate of communes, in which a system of community will abolish private ownership and the split-up economy and eliminate the differences between town and country. The principle of equality will be enforced consistently and completely. In far sharper words than Cabet, Dézamy rejects the Saint-Simonian "principle of abilities" as the assertion of a new type of inequality. He comes out for proportional equality, which, in relation to distribution of products, means distribution according to one's needs. In the new society coercion will be unnecessary—the social laws will be an authentic, direct expression of the laws of nature, the law will become a simple rule, a simple offer to be taken up; labour will become a compulsive need of all members of society. The organisation of work will be based not only on a division of labour but also on opportunities for changing one's occupation.

Dézamy does not openly declare himself a revolutionary. What is more, like Cabet he is convinced that the interests of the rich and

[1] See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 28.
[2] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, S. 357.
[3] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 397.

the poor coincide in the final analysis by virtue of human nature. However, he indisputably regards a revolutionary takeover as a means of establishing the system of community. The people "will awaken some day, proud and formidable". Dézamy describes the revolution of 1793 as powerful, armed, full of enthusiasm, and majestic. He is an advocate of consistent democracy. At the same time, Dézamy clearly understands that universal suffrage is by no means a panacea and that without social equality political equality will only make the chains of the exploited heavier.[1]

The interpretation of the period of transition to communism holds an important place in Dézamy's system of views. He derides Cabet's idea that after the victory of the popular revolution the aristocracy will reconcile itself to its defeat: "On the contrary, the constant and ever multiplying wounds that you will have to inflict on it will daily intensify its nostalgia for the past and its hatred."[2] In this context Dézamy compares Cabet to a man who, having disarmed a fierce and desperate enemy, immediately puts the lethal dagger back into his hands.

Dézamy was unable to give a scientific explanation of his views. In his justified criticism of Cabet and his visionary schemes, Dézamy could not indicate a realistic alternative to his hopes for the meekness of the aristocracy and the propertied in the post-revolutionary period, because he was far from understanding the class essence of a revolutionary dictatorship. Besides Cabet's mistaken conjectures Dézamy also rejected his fruitful ideas, for instance, those concerning a stage-by-stage introduction of community, the impossibility to substitute a military invasion for a revolution to liberate the oppressed peoples in other countries as yet unfamiliar with the system of community.

Dézamy deemed it possible to enforce community of property simultaneously so as to avoid provoking, by gradual expropriation, the former owners and the aristocracy to desperate resistance. The only fruitful idea here was the immediate provision for the working people of real benefits from the victory of the revolution (for instance, the expropriation of apartments of the rich for the needy working-class families). As for socialisation of all property at one go, in Dézamy's scheme this exactly would create a situation Cabet wanted to bring about by gradual socialisation: the former exploiters deprived of property and hence power would finally "decide to take their seats at banquet for all".[3]

---

[1] See *Code de la communauté par T. Dézamy*, Paris, 1842, pp. 12, 50, 51, 61, 66, 217, 251.

[2] Ibid., p. 290

[3] Ibid., p. 291.

Some of Dézamy's conclusions attracted the attention of Marx: man's natural propensity for association and social life; morals as the total of all effective means best suited for the establishment of fraternity; reliance, in concern for general welfare, on the principle rather than on the individual whoever he may be; the necessity for the people to be guided by truth, whatever its origin; the involvement of all members of future society in work; the self-seeking abuse of suffrage by the bourgeoisie and the role of universal suffrage in helping implement the communist principles; ability of all citizens inhabiting the communes to perform legislative functions in future society, because the social organisation will be simplified to the extreme. Finally, Marx made special note of the following conclusion by Dézamy: The death of workers ruined by exploitation is "murder, which is to be blamed on the order of things rather than people, and, nevertheless, this is real murder".[1]

A distinctive trait of Dézamy's doctrine was its militant character. "...Instead of offering man useless consolation, instead of wasting his energies on superstitious rites, instead of allowing his thoughts to wander high beyond the clouds, and, finally, instead of leading him along the path of illusions and disillusionment towards bitter realities the *communist physiologists* can give man all moral strength, all necessary power by proving to him in an obvious, tangible way that here *on Earh*, *within his reach* and *near at hand*, is the *real* happiness he is looking for and which seems to be constantly escaping him—the promised land of the biblical times flowing with milk and honey."[2] Dézamy was evidently the first to formulate the idea of "paradise on earth instead of heavens", which the working man can build with his own hands.

AUGUSTE BLANQUI—A POLITICAL REVOLUTIONARY AND WORKER COMMUNIST

During the uprising in May 1839 Blanqui failed to get massive support from the vanguard class, the workers. In France in that period there was neither revolutionary enthusiasm among the people, nor vacillations in the intermediate strata. No revolutionary situation had yet taken shape in the country. Blanqui had wrongly assessed the situation: he expected that a conspiracy of a handful of intellectuals launching a surprise attack on the nerve centres of the oppressive regime and then appealing to the masses would inflame the people of Paris. Nine years later, having arrived in Paris on the third day of the February revolution of 1848, Blanqui would declare

[1] *Code de la communauté par T. Dézamy*, Paris, 1842, p. 60.
[2] Ibid, p. 229.

to 500 armed citizens prepared to fight the bourgeois provisional government: "Let us find enough common sense to wait a few days more, and the revolution will belong to us! If, however, like thieves in the dead of night, we seize power in a surprise attack, who will vouch that our government will be there to last?... We need broad popular masses, suburbs blazing in the flames of a rebellion, we need another 10th of August"[1] (an allusion to the uprising of 1792 in Paris, which overthrew the monarchy). This statement was an extension of the tactics used in May 1839 on the same basis: with the plan of an uprising ready, the revolutionaries appeal to the masses supposed to be itching for a fight and only waiting for a call "To Arms!". Blanqui failed to comprehend the objective necessity for a staged development of the revolution, without which it is impossible in general to work out scientifically grounded tactics of the proletariat; his assessment of the degree of imminence of a popular explosion was overoptimistic, oblivious of the fact that in the new historical situation a proletarian party was a *sine qua non* for effective revolutionary leadership. The most comprehensive description of shortcomings of the Blanquist tactics was given by Lenin in his work *Marxism and Insurrection*. Lenin wrote that an uprising must rely on the vanguard class, on revolutionary enthusiasm of the people, on the turning point in the development of the revolution, when the activity of the frontline contingents of the people is at its height and vacillations in the ranks of the enemy and the hesitant sympathisers of the revolution are the strongest. "And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish *Marxism from Blanquism*."[2]

At the same time for Blanqui a conspiracy followed by an open declaration of its goals was a form of appealing to the popular masses, the proletariat first and foremost. Apart from his characteristically clearcut line towards the political differentiation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, Blanqui should be given credit for yet another major service to the working class in the field of tactics. He was the first after the great Jacobins of the late-18th century to start a search for ways to organise a popular revolution. Before Blanqui the revolutionaries who intended to rely on the masses had believed, in view of the experience of 1789 and 1830, that a mass revolution was a blast triggered off, as it were, by an unexpected strike of lightning at the explosive charge of popular resentment, an irrational phenomenon. Blanqui, however, regarded revolution as a cause that needs organisation and was the first to refuse to wait for a mysterious force—the spirit of justice, reason and Enlightenment—

---

[1] Suzanne Wassermann, *Les clubs de Barbes et de Blanqui en 1848*, Paris, Edward Cornély et Cie, Éditeurs, 1913, pp. 49-50.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 23.

to appear in the role of a thunderer. He attempted to convert conspiratorial tactics into a tool of the popular revolution.

Blanqui was above all a French revolutionary, concerned first and foremost about the interests of the French proletarians. At the same time he continued the internationalist tradition of the revolutionary movement in his country and was actively involved in cultivating this tradition in the French labour movement.[1]

Blanqui was a revolutionary of the "past generation"—Marat, Robespierre, and Saint-Just of the French workers of the 19th century, a man who continued the cause of Babeuf. Alongside this, he drew many correct political and tactical conclusions from the revolutionary experience in new conditions. The main of them were independent actions of the proletariat, independence from the bourgeoisie—an indispensable condition for their success; for the masses to win victory, they must be organised; the establishment of the political power of the working people is the only possible way towards a cardinal social transformation.

These were considerations mostly of a practical character, which by no means represented a scientific system of views. Other proletarian revolutionaries of the pre-Marxian epoch had also arrived or were arriving at them. None of them, however, was as clearly aware as Blanqui that a revolution required preparation and organisation.

Unlike Cabet, Dézamy, and Weitling, Blanqui never attempted to devise his own project of remaking society or a model of its future organisation. This man of action put forward a concrete socio-political programme only in the course of struggle. Nevertheless, he had a fully-formed system of views on the past and future of mankind. For Blanqui socialism meant faith in a new order that was to come out of the crucible of social theories designed to remake the world on the principles of justice and equality. He was a follower of the 18th-century French materialists and their militant atheism; at the same time, like the Jacobins he was convinced that liberation struggle is based on the eternal principles of morality, justice, freedom, equality, conscience, law, patriotism, and progress. In Blanqui's

[1] In 1850 the Blanquists and the Chartists concluded an agreement on joint actions with the Central Committee of the Communist League. In 1861 when Blanqui was arrested by the Bonapartist police and Marx took part in the campaign of protest against his cruel treatment in prison, Blanqui informed Marx through his friend, Dr. Watteau, that he was "deeply moved by the sympathetic attitude of the German proletarians". Watteau, expressing the sentiments prevailing among the Blanquists, wrote: "...The revolution that concerns you concerns me also, even if you are as far as Moscow" (to those West European democrats and socialists who were uninformed of the state of the revolutionary movement in Russia, Moscow looked like a place at the world's end).—The Central Party Archives, Institute of Marxism-Leninism, Moscow. Fund 1, Register 1, No. 5578.

view that he expressed in 1834 the idea of equality is the springhead of progress. His interpretation of history is idealistic. He presents the past of mankind and France as a confrontation between the idea of equality and the idea of privilege, but at the same time he considers it a history of the struggle of "the poor classes" against the aristocracy (by birth right and by property rights). According to Blanqui, the collision between the weavers and the factory owners in Lyons was a conflict of interests. However, the main guarantee of victory of the new social order is the idea of equality, its "moral superiority over privilege".[1] Referring to his opponents, the bourgeois Republicans, he exclaimed: "They want to excite interests ... I want to awaken conscience. The world is elevated by the lever of enthusiasm."[2]

Blanqui was an enthusiastic partisan of communism. In his eyes this was primarily a natural system in which good is beneficial to all and evil to nobody, abundant stocks do not entail industrial or trade crises, everything is consistent with justice and reason. Mankind advances towards communism through rigid forms of association. As long as association is at the service of capitalism, it is a formidable weapon in its hands, the capitalist is aware of its power and uses it to ruin small and middle industries, small and middle trade. "Such are the predestinations of fate: before its death the past will deal its last blow with the very same weapon that is bound to kill it."[3]

Blanqui was still very far from the thought that communism is bound to arise from the downfall of capitalism predetermined by its own economic laws. In his view, the main motive force pushing society towards communism is education. If the 38 million Frenchmen and women, he wrote, suddenly turned into scientists, the system of community would be in full operation within a month.

Unable to deduce a model of the future from an analysis of the society of his time, Blanqui protested against the working people and their ideologists wasting their time on finalising the details of their conjectures rather than waging real struggle. Having in mind members of future society, Blanqui remarked ironically: "And these forty million people none of us is fit to hold a candle to would need our advice in order to organize, our rules and our supervision! Without us they would not know where to find their shirts and pants, and they will put their food into their ears, if we don't warn them that

---

[1] Maurice Dommanget, *Les idées politiques et sociales d'Auguste Blanqui*, Librairie Marcel Rivière et Cie, Paris, 1957, p. 129.

[2] Ibid., p. 132.

[3] Auguste Blanqui, *Critique sociale*, Paris, 1885, Félix Alcan, Éditeur, Tome 1, p. 176.

they should put it into their mouths."[1] It is important to note, however, that Blanqui aims these poisoned arrows not at Dézamy or Cabet, Babeuf or Weitling at all; he answers here the petty-bourgeois philistines who justified their solicitous ardour by hypocritical concern for the future and demanded that their "young rival—communism" should describe the future system in the minutest detail.[2]

This system, Blanqui writes, ought to be regarded as the general outcome of the development of the human race (Blanqui has in mind spiritual development) rather than as an "egg laid in some corner of the earth by a two-legged bird without feathers and wings."[3]

Blanqui was much more indignant at the Saint-Simonians and the Fourierists than at Cabet, whom he accused only of a propensity for "lame hypotheses". The epigoni of Saint-Simon and Fourier were the target of Blanqui's scathing criticism primarily because they had "declared war on revolution".

According to one of Blanqui's main conclusions, communism embodies revolution, it should avoid the ways of a Utopia and never depart from politics. But recently it had been outside politics, and now it was at the heart of it. Politics "is but its servant".[4] The connection between politics and social change, so natural for any literate Chartist worker who arrived at this conclusion in his daily struggle, in the French labour movement after Babeuf was acknowledged in clearcut form only by Blanqui ("socialism is inconceivable without a political revolution"). However, he went farther than the Chartists: to Blanqui politics meant revolutionary politics, social transformation meant communism, and subordination of politics to the social goal was much more clearcut in his views than in those of representatives of mass Chartism.

Blanqui, the only ideological leader of the French proletariat in the 30s and 40s who did not evolve his own socialist scheme, was a worker communist from head to foot. However, he differed from other worker communists in at least three important points: he concentrated, as has been pointed out, not on constructing a model of future society but on working out political measures of transition to it; he regarded these measures primarily as actions that would ensure the triumphant development of the revolution; and whereas all other Utopian worker communists left the scene after the ruin of their Utopian hopes and plans, Blanqui remained one of the most prestigious leaders of the revolutionary proletariat for many decades. The latter circumstance was attributable not only to the indomitable character of this political fighter but also to the significance of the

[1] Ibid., p. 192.
[2] Ibid., p. 191.
[3] Ibid., p. 199.
[4] Ibid., p. 201.

problem on which Blanqui concentrated: developing methods of independent organisation and ways of pursuing independent tactics of the working people in the revolution. This was a vitally important problem of the working-class emancipation movement, which was resolved in the course of a prolonged theoretical and practical struggle.

Blanqui stood far aloof from scientific socialism. He failed to comprehend the historic mission of the proletariat, although he devoted all his life to the workers' cause. His criticism of the capitalist system is amazingly helpless theoretically. He had no skill of a scientific class approach, and was aided only by his class instinct. His ideas about the laws governing the development of revolution and about revolutionary tactics ignored the fundamental changes which had taken place in society, and were no more than Jacobinic tactics improved on the basis of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848. That is why this man who despised Utopianism remained a Utopian communist all his life.

At the same time, Blanqui's revolutionary practical and theoretical activities imparted a real content to Utopian worker communism, translating it into the language of concrete revolutionary demands of the proletariat. Marx described Blanqui as "the brain and heart of the proletarian party in France".[1] Lenin characterised him as indisputably a revolutionary and an ardent supporter of socialism.[2] This description points out the two main aspects of Blanqui's activities and his historical contributions.

WILHELM WEITLING: THE UNPRECEDENTED LITERARY DEBUT OF THE GERMAN WORKERS

The theoretical and practical activities of Wilhelm Weitling (1808-1871) were an important factor in the development of the class self-awareness of the German artisan proletariat. Weitlingianism was the highest stage in the ideological and political advancement of the German proletarians in the pre-Marxian period. Weitling attempted to introduce his ideas into the German labour movement and achieved impressive successes in this field. For all that he remained a Utopian communist. He was motivated by his resentment of the German social and political order and his faith in the omnipotence of the ideas of justice and progress. Weitling, however, was the only Utopian communist then to appeal mostly to wage labourers and to come forward as such a determined champion of revolutionary and forcible remaking of society by means of mass action. He was the only Utopian communist to criticise so vehemently the traditions of obedience

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 30, S. 617.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 475.

cultivated among the working people by their oppressors for centuries, to give such keen attention to the revolutionary potential of the toiling peasantry, to advance the idea of new revolutionary morality with such determination. Weitling alone envisaged such a wide variety of revolutionary means and linked so closely the question of attachment to one's homeland with the social problems, with the position of the working people in their homeland. Only he and Blanqui rejected so sharply any idea of some community of interests between the exploited and the exploiters.

In the theoretical field, however, Weitling failed to advance farther than Babeuf, whose ideas found their boldest and most vivid development in Weitlingianism. Weitling's idealistic views, his confinement to the circle of "eternal ideas" and "natural rights", his disregard for the fact that he and his followers were at the beginning rather than at the end of the final stage in mankind's liberation struggle, misunderstanding of the historically progressive role of capitalism and the historic mission of the proletariat, the eclectic Babouvist-Fourierist character of his schemes are obvious. Nevertheless, in the study of the system of Weitling's views, which was, as Marx put it, "this *vehement* and brilliant literary debut of the German workers",[1] the attention should be focussed not on what Weitling could not give the labour movement but on what he actually gave it. Incidentally, such an approach is justified in relation to the entire working-class (communist and revolutionary Chartist) part of Utopian socialism, because its emergence marked an important step forward in the formation of the class consciousness of the proletariat and in the practices of its revolutionary struggle.

In its original variant Weitling's system of views was published in 1838.[2] In 1841 Weitling settled in Switzerland where he founded the first German labour journal, *Hilferuf der deutschen Jugend* (from January 1842 to May 1843, when it was closed, the journal was called *Die junge Generation*). In this journal he popularised his views and criticised "pure republicanism". In Switzerland, Weitling wrote and published the most profound of his works—*Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit* (1842).

Weitling's criticism of the social system of his time was conducted mainly from the standpoint of the oppressed wage labourer, though it often implied also defence of the interests of all the oppressed and exploited. In this respect, Weitling ranks higher than Dézamy and Blanqui, not to speak of Cabet. He writes about "millions of people who have no property at all", he represents the interests of the "hard-working labourer", protests against the "killing of a multitude of

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 201.
[2] W. Weitling, *Die Menschheit, wie sie ist und wie sie sein sollte*, Paris, 1838.

workers", against the miserable lot of "good workers" and "inexperienced workers".[1]

Weitling deliberately foments the class hatred of the havenots for the haves, the poor for the rich, the worker for the capitalist. Like Dézamy he regards the death of working people from privations and emaciation caused by their exploitation as murder committed by property. He is unwilling to talk like Cabet and Dézamy about the "hidden community" of interests of the exploiting rich and the exploited poor. Weitling is the first worker communist to have no intention to observe society from a non-partisan position. He is not just an author of a Utopia, a student of political and philosophic problems or an ideologist admitting theoretically the expediency of any, even extreme, measure of social action—he is a fighter full of righteous and formidable wrath.

In his works Weitling drew an impressive picture, evoking hostility towards the exploiters, of the distribution of social benefits and social ills among the working poor and "all these big and small masters" whom "the monetary system has imposed upon us". "They" are entitled to everything, and "we" to what remains. Addressing "them", Weitling declares that "we" (toilers) and "they" are "alien" to each other and that "our interests are antagonistic".[2] In his *Garantien* he never, either directly or indirectly, pleads with the oppressors on behalf of the oppressed, never appeals to their human feelings, or stoops to a complaint.

Weitling is profoundly convinced that the communist system can and must be established through a revolution. True, to him a revolution is by no means a requirement of the material development of society; he even makes no conjectures to this effect. At the same time, his approach to the problem of revolution contains features that were absent in the French and English systems of critical Utopian communism and socialism. Weitling speaks, above all, of a revolution of the oppressed and the indigent against the oppressors and the rich and by no means about a revolution of champions of some abstract idea of justice against its enemies. He is directly engaged in a search for those social groups of the oppressed which will carry out the revolution; in his conception this will be a ruthless, irresistible revolution.

In the first sections of *Garantien* Weitling expresses his attitude to a forcible takeover of power. He regrets that the spectre of misery does not turn into "an infuriated tiger quickly gobbling its prey"; he cannot give a hand to a fallen comrade, because he is busy "charging his rifle". He resolutely rejects reformism as a way of remaking

[1] W. Weitling, *Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit*, Visis, 1842.
[2] Ibid., pp. 70, 87.

society and declares: "The downfall of the existing system is a revolution; consequently, progress is conceivable through revolution alone. Long live revolution!"; "our principle will be implemented with the aid of a revolution."[1] Weitling, however, makes a number of reservations: the victory of new ideas will be a revolution regardless of whether this will be a victory by force or reason, by the people or a monarch supporting new ideas; besides, revolutions will not always involve bloodshed. The entire course of Weitling's further reasoning shows, however, that he does not attach too much importance to these reservations.[2]

According to Weitling, the transition period should not be made too long. "If you are strong enough, the snake head must be crushed immediately. This does not mean that the enemies should be given a blood bath or imprisoned, but they should be deprived of all means with which they could harm us."[3] The transition period will not bring the people relief overnight—poverty has become implanted much too deeply; in a situation of general want, however, it would be unfair to preserve for "the powerful rich" even a share of "their selfish interests".

A revolution, according to Weitling, who was obviously familiar with the activities and speeches of the Jacobins, especially Danton, must act with determination, deal lightning blows one after another, trust no promises of the enemies (Weitling obviously has in mind also the resistance of the enemies of the revolution after its victory): "Once they have started a struggle, one should treat them [the enemies] as one would treat beasts devoid of reason, which are unable to understand intelligent speech."[4]

A revolution, according to Weitling, is, above all, a rebellion, a civil war of the indigent against their propertied oppressors, the power of a strong revolutionary government which, relying on the masses, undertakes despotic and deep interference in property relations.

Weitling proved unable to give a scientific answer to the question as to which stratum of the oppressed should be in the vanguard of revolutionary struggle. The very presentation of this question, however, was something absolutely new. In his anxious search for an answer to it the author of *Garantien* is guided by "elementary common sense"; he is seeking the social group which is most oppressed and at the same time most active and ready to take up arms. He appeals, above all, to the masses plunged into boundless poverty, an abyss

[1] Wilhelm Weitling, *Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit*, Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1955, S. 228, 248.
[2] Ibid., p. 256.
[3] Ibid., p. 256.
[4] Ibid., p. 258.

of despair. These masses are a compressed spring, and it is the duty of the revolutionaries to let this spring recoil. Later, in 1843, Weitling advanced the idea of raising a force of 20 to 40 thousand destitute people driven to despair.[1] Weitling, of course, did not consider criminals the finest elements of society. He saw in their actions a violation of the generally accepted morals, but he denounced these very morals as contradictory to the natural laws and the precepts of the Christian faith. On the other hand, the author of *Garantien* was confident that reorganisation of society would do away with the causes of crime.

Nevertheless, in search of an active revolutionary force Weitling turned his attention precisely to this social group and, naturally, he was profoundly mistaken. He underestimated the corruptness of the lumpen proletarians and had no idea of how much such elements could discredit the revolutionary cause. Regarding the immorality of the exploitation system as an important stimulus for its revolutionary destruction, the immorality itself being caused by the very organisation of society, he lapsed into a contradiction with his own views, assuming that a revolution could be accomplished not as an explosion of the bourgeois standards to be replaced by the higher standards of communist society but only as the sum total of violations of bourgeois standards. Finally, he vaguely discriminated between the latter and the "simple laws of morals and justice", to which Marx pointed later.[2] Weitling's plan was the wrong answer to the question he had brilliantly posed concerning the social vanguard of the revolution of the lower classes; a correct answer could be given only within the framework of the materialistic interpretation of history.

In Weitling's views his programme of the initial measures to be taken by the revolutionary government holds an especially important place. He deems it necessary to begin with distribution of clothes to the poor out of the stocks of the rich, to settle the poor in houses of the rich and to annul the former's promissory notes. Simultaneously, he proposed the abolition of the inheritance right, and confiscation of the landed estates of the emigrés and the lands and property of the government officials. The latter requirement reflected Weitling's strong concern lest the victorious people again fall under the sway of the propertied class, as had invariably been the case in the past revolutions.

---

[1] He expressed this idea in his letters to the Parisian leaders of the League of the Just. The letters have not survived. The contents of the letters can be surmised from the answers of Hermann Ewerbeck and other members of the League of the Just to W. Weitling (see *Der Bund der Kommunisten*. Dokumente und Materialen, S. 158-64, 167-68.)

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 18.

Further, he suggested specific measures to set up communes as the immediate, urgent tasks of the transition period. Whereas in Blanqui's scheme the confiscated property of the enemies of the revolution becomes the property of the state, Weitling considers it possible to hand it over directly to the local communes.

In contrast to Cabet, Weitling believes that the transition period will be a hard time for the people: the needs of the vast masses cannot be satisfied immediately unless all social wealth is consumed; here Weitling indisputably implies the ravages of the revolution and the civil war. Only after a twofold increase in what has remained will it be possible to increase consumption and shorten the working time; it will be necessary to cultivate the waste lands and also to "build railways necessary for production and exchange, just as factories and machines".[1]

Remaining an idealist, Weitling, however, does not recognise the omnipotence of "the voice of reason": "Who has ever or anywhere seen such people [those who have power and money] heeding the voice of reason?" In search of an active revolutionary force he appeals to the material interests of certain social strata: "The present-day German peasant cannot be easily inspired with phrases. For fried sausage he would give, if at all, as much as for his monarch or for a republic. He hardly has any idea of what a republic means. But if I tell him: you will be just as well off in the future as your masters, and if he sees that that is true, in short, if he understands that it is a question of his interests, then he may be inclined in favour of the movement."[2] In a sense that was a Chartist way of reasoning (the Chartists used to say that Chartism is a question of knife and fork).

Weitling's social doctrine, like all communist Utopian theories, went no further than egalitarian communism. True, Weitling objected to the idea of "equal sharing in poverty" as a way to create a communist society. Nor did he think it possible to turn all workers into petty owners of individual workshops; in his opinion, such an attempt at fragmentation would only lead to a useless waste of materials and working time, to bankruptcy of a mass of small masters and advantage for a few.

Nevertheless, Weitling's communism was of an egalitarian character. Weitling was not a champion of one of the most fundamental ideas of Saint-Simonianism: "from each according to his ability, to each ability according to work". Whereas Dézamy opposes this principle, Weitling ignores the problem of the natural disparity of abilities altogether. He was also infinitely far from an understanding of the simple fact that in any historical epoch economic production

[1] Wilhelm Weitling, op. cit., p. 256.
[2] Ibid., pp. 247, 273.

and the social structure inevitably following from it form the basis for political and cultural development. It was scientific communism that established that under capitalism the class struggle, whose content and character are determined in the final analysis by the economic foundation, reached a stage where the exploited class (the proletariat) cannot cast off the yoke of the exploiter class (the bourgeoisie) without delivering thereby the whole society from any oppression and without abolishing private ownership of the means of production in whatever form. The other communistic systems were just an extension of the revolutionary idea of equality. It was not fortuitous that Engels, who described the communism of the League of the Just as "narrow-minded equalitarian communism" gave a profound explanation: "By equalitarian communism I understand, as stated, only that communism which bases itself exclusively or predominantly on the demand for equality".[1]

The tactics Weitling offers the Communists to follow proceeds in principle from the two main postulates of French and German worker communism: in the impending revolution the working people must act as an independent force, and this revolution will be a social upheaval, which is to be followed by a transition period to communist society (Weitling hopes that the transition will not last longer than three years but he also admits the possibility of a much more protracted civil war).

Characteristic of Weitling is a sharply negative attitude to reforms. His assessment of the significance of partial progressive changes, bourgeois freedoms, the republican form of the state, working people's associations (from the experience of England and France in different periods of their history) evidences that he regarded reforms, including those he himself described as revolutionary and which were wrested or could have been wrested by the struggle of the masses, only as an alternative to the imminent communist revolution. This was due not only to his failure to comprehend the bourgeois character of the revolution impending in Germany and his mistaken belief that the conditions for a communist revolution had already ripened. Weitling repeatedly put forward and explained another general principle: the worse the plight of the people, the sooner their patience cracks and the more decisive, radical and deeper-going the revolution. What is more, Weitling presumed that if the ruling classes made no concessions, it is the duty of the revolutionary to "give up resistance to disorder and, on the contrary, to try and bring it to such an extreme where the poor people would find in this growing chaos the same pleasure as a soldier finds in war, and the oppressors would suffer from it just as the rich suffer from war."[2]

[1] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 175.
[2] Wilhelm Weitling, op. cit., pp. 248, 255.

In other words, Weitling was a convinced champion of the idea "the worse, the better". An explanation for this view of Weitling's should be sought primarily in the specific German realities, the spirit of general submission pervading them, philistinism, fear of the powers that be, in that all social life came to a stand-still in Germany, between 1834 and 1840. As Engels wrote: "There appeared no further chance of bringing about any public movement whatsoever in Germany; the governments had it all their own way".[1]

In that situation Weitling was prepared to resort to any means to awaken the masses from their slumber and arouse their revolutionary enthusiasm, to set them in motion. He knew no other tactics than reformism and those that he proposed himself.

It was only Marx and Engels who a few years later proposed revolutionary tactics as an alternative to those of Weitling and, we might add, recommended them to the Chartists as well.[2] The evolvement of these tactics, based on a scientific comprehension of the social essence and character of the forthcoming revolution and of the struggle within the camp of the ruling classes, meant the theoretical liquidation of the "the worse, the better" principle. Marx and Engels never applied or recommended it, presuming that the Communists ought to struggle in the name of the immediate goals and interests of the workers, taking care simultaneously of the future of the movement in their present-day activities. They never opposed these interconnected tasks to one another. When Marx said that "the actual pressure must be made more pressing", he saw only one way acceptable to a Communist—to add to the actual pressure "consciousness of pressure".[3] This was consistent both with the immediate tasks facing the labour movement and the struggle for the ultimate goals of the proletariat.

Utopian worker communism was a definite stage in the development of the class self-awareness of the proletariat. At the same time, Weitling and other prominent Utopian communists of the 30s and 40s were by no means mere epigoni of "classical" Utopian socialism. In their comprehension of some fundamentally important problems of social reorganisation and its possible ways the theoreticians of worker communism went farther than the great Utopians. Their appeal to the working people and at times even mostly to wage labourers is a historic merit of worker communism. Unlike Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, who regarded the exploited only as a suffering class, Weitling, Cabet and other worker Communists discerned in them an "active element" of the liberation of society. This was yet another long step forward of worker communism as compared with

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 32.
[2] See Chapter 7.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 178.

Utopian socialism. Further, worker communism appealed for a revolutionary remaking of society. The champions of worker communism developed the Babouvist ideas according to which the system of community would be established by the practical revolutionary struggle of the working masses. Following the Babouvists the Utopian communists of the 30s and 40s specified, in particular, the conception of the period of transition to communism.

In other words Utopian worker communism reflected more directly than classical Utopian socialism the aspirations, sentiments and the level of self-awareness of the emerging working class at a time when it began more and more actively to come on the historical scene and took the road of independent political struggle.

Nevertheless, just as classical Utopian socialism, worker communism of the 1830s and 1840s was a product of the still immature social relations. Like Saint-Simon, Owen and Fourier the Utopian Communists sheerly invented an ideal social system. And they, too, proved unable to find out the objective laws leading to the inevitable replacement of exploitation society by socialism.

THE VIEWS OF REVOLUTIONARY CHARTISM

French and German worker communism and the ideology of revolutionary Chartism were in the final analysis phenomena of a common socio-political order that marked the highest stage in the development of the most revolutionary trends in critical Utopian socialism. This is evidenced by theoretical documents of Chartism related to the period under review. Their assessment of the increasingly deep-going economic and social contradictions, the description of their causes, the intention to restructure the existing social relations according to the interests of the proletarians—all reveal a profound affinity between the Chartist views and those of representatives of worker communism.

In late 1841 and early 1842 the *Northern Star* published a series of editorials under the general title "Wages of Labour and 'Extensions' of Commerce". The author, revealing the untenability of the promises that the free traders lavished on the workers (in the event of an expansion of trade the workers would live in paradise on earth—with cheap bread, high wages, and full employment), pointed out that production and trade had been continually expanding during the past few decades as well; in the meantime, however, the wages of the workers had diminished to the same extent that production had grown. This suggested the following conclusion: the workers were not interested in a further extension of the existing system; it was good for the bourgeoisie, but the workers wished to change it.[1] Another

[1] *The Northern Star*, January 1, 1842.

article, entitled "Use, and Abuse, of Machinery" (Feb. 5, 1842), attacked the allegation of the free traders that the Chartists were enemies of the machines and argued that they were opposed only to their wrong application, which caused the accumulation of immense wealth, on the one hand, and misery, low wages and the attendant high food prices, on the other. If machinery "be so used and applied as to confer the whole benefit upon a very few, and to inflict misery, destitution and death upon the producing many, no justification for that application can be offered. It is also equally as apparent that our machinery has always hitherto been so applied." Denouncing the practices of using machinery by capital when that which was of itself one of the greatest of blessings was made into "the greatest of scourges and curses", the paper upheld the "rightful application" of machinery to secure the working man "his fair share of the benefit". It also categorically rejected the attempts to depict remaking of the existing social system as something impracticable and unfeasible and declared that since the bourgeoisie was unable to change the social order the working people themselves should undertake this task. "Tell us not that these things must continue!", wrote *The Northern Star* concerning the "abuse of machinery". "Tell us not that it is impossible otherwise to apply machinery. Tell us not that it is impossible to *secure* the working man his fair share of the benefit accruing from every improvement! Tell us not that this cannot be done! We tell you, not only *that it can*, but That It Must! And if those in power cannot find out the way to do this effectually and un-injuriously to all, they must give way to those who can. A better and more just *distribution* of the 'fruits' of toil *must be made*, and if our legislators and governors be unequal or indisposed to this task, out they must come!"

The problems of analysing the economic structure of English society and, primarily, that of the root causes of the plight of the working class were discussed in many other articles published in *The Northern Star*. According to estimates of the author of one article ("Solution of the Astounding Anomaly, that Over-Production of Clothing and Food, Can and Does Exist Amongst a Starving and Pining People", July 30, 1842) in the period 1792-1842 Great Britain had increased its means of producing wealth more than forty-fold, but this failed to raise the living standard of the people; on the contrary, "as production has increased from a certain point, so also has increased penury and indigence". This idea was often repeated in the political and economic discourses of Chartist theoreticians and was the peculiar leitmotif of Chartist political economy which sought to unravel the essence of capitalist exploitation.

In the early 40s the pamphlet *An Examination of the Corn and Provision Laws from Their First Enactment to the Present Period* (Man-

chester, 1841) by John Campbell, Secretary to the Executive Council of the National Charter Association, was very popular in the Chartist circles. The significance of the *Examination* extended beyond the framework of the question of the Corn Laws, that was in effect a textbook of Chartist political economy. The Chartists often used Campbell's materials in theoretical discussions with free traders. His views were keynoted by a sharply critical attitude to the system of capitalist production as a whole. In Campbell's opinion, the repeal of the Corn Laws would result in production growth; in the conditions of the existing social system, however, this growth had a pernicious effect on the worker. "Every additional improvement, instead of diminishing labour, is actually increasing it." While it increases the labour of one man, it "throws another on the street to starve" (p. 21). The introduction of machines in any branch of the economy immediately affects the position of the workers in other branches. Referring to the projects of reforms proposed by the free traders, who regarded free trade as a cure-all, Campbell wrote ironically: "If these are the blessings of commerce, I only wish that the individuals who are seeking for free trade and extended commerce, had a taste of the factory system, by being forced into one of them." (p. 29).

He showed that the proletarians received an ever smaller share of the earning from their output. He foresaw that "the time is fast arriving when there will be only two parties in the state—the oppressor and the oppressed—the plundering non-producer, and the plundered producer" (p. 48). The idea that production growth under the prevailing conditions led to the workers' impoverishment rather than an improvement in their well-being, that the plight of the working class was a prerequisite for the accumulation of wealth by the bourgeoisie and that the capitalist was directly interested in a decline of the living and moral standards of the workers ensued from the daily experience of the proletariat and was quite widespread.

The Chartists did not conceal their intention to remake the social system in the interest of the working class. The People's Charter is "the *instrument* through which we propose to remodel those institutions which affect our social well-being", declared the prominent Chartists James Leach, George White, and John West.[1]

The article "The Oppressed Factory Slaves and Their *Ci-Devant* Advocate" published in *The Northern Star* (Feb. 5, 1842) pointed out that the free traders were drawing a false picture of the Chartists, alleging that they had no interest but the Charter. That was a lie.

[1] George White, John West, James Leach, "Chartism and the Charter, Defended. By the Kirkdale Chartist Prisoners".—In: *Chartist Tracts for the Times* (Leeds 1850), No. 8, p. 8.

The Chartists had never been maniacs obsessed with one idea. They supported the struggle against capital. That was the most important matter for them. After the victory of the Charter Parliament would have to busy itself with the question of a shorter working day. The capitalists were interested in preserving the existing social order. They sought to appropriate the whole product of the worker's labour. The Chartists, however, were fighting against the system of production by means of inanimate machines used in such a way that the worker's home was being destroyed, his family demoralised, with nothing but physical existence being left to the worker, and even this the new system threatened to take away from him.

According to the Chartists' views, the workers should be given access to political power so as to change the social system in their own interests. The Charter was but an instrument to attain this goal—defence of labour rights. Beyond the victory of the Charter the Chartists saw the vague outline of a new social system: fair wages, the application of machinery beneficial not only to the factory owners but also to the workers, regulation of the capitalists' profits, abolition of large landed estates and resettlement of a vast mass of the workers on the land, abrogation of all evil laws and promulgation of new laws protecting the interests of the workers.

In the opinion of the Chartists, the consistent implementation of all these measures would lead to the emancipation of labour.

The author of the article "What We Must Do With The Charter When We Get It" published in the *London Chartist Monthly Magazine* (Sept. 1843) declared: "We may strive till eternity to bring round a revolution in society, and strive in vain; ...but get hold of the Government and the thing could be done at once." Socialists and Chartists would be elected to Parliament. A government would be formed from among them. It would employ the jobless primarily for the cultivation of waste lands. The taxation system would be radically revised, very few taxes would remain, the tithe would be abolished and the Church separated from the State. "The standing army would be superseded by a local militia, all sinecures (monarchy being the greatest) should be abolished together with all unmerited pensions and monopolies ... taxes taken of labour and laid upon property would prevent the undue accumulation of the latter. Machinery would work for us like magic. We would have stores instead of shops—no competition though plenty of emulation." There would be no kings, no aristocracy, no soldiers, no hangmen: a better occupation would be found for them. A new system would come into being—with "no bankruptcies, no gambling aristocracy, no swindling gentry, no reduced tradesmen, no working men travelling footsore in search of work, dying in ditches of hunger, or in hospitals of famine fever." There would be no beggary, no emigration, and no honest men would

be forced like Cobbett to exclaim, "are we in England, or are we in Hell?" (pp. 108-12).

In the article "Chartism and Socialism" (July 1843) an unknown Chartist appealed: "...let us have a Government composed of Chartist-Socialists. Chartism is the short cut to Socialism: by the flaming sword of Chartism can you alone guard your Social paradise." The author explained to the Socialists that they could be supported only by a government based on the principles of the Charter (pp. 47-48).

The English labour movement of that epoch, Lenin pointed out, had brilliantly anticipated much of future Marxism.[1] Among such anticipations of the Chartists one may mention the idea that the plight of the working class is an indispensable prerequisite for the accumulation of wealth by the bourgeoisie, that the proletarians should therefore "rely upon themselves" only for their own enfranchisement, that the way out of the "most degrading and inhuman state of slavery" can be found only through political struggle, that "the first requisite, the *sine qua non*—before any good can be done is to get Political Power", as this idea was formulated in the article "The Land".[2] Such conclusions followed from the socio-political experience of the proletariat.

The Chartists, however, could not explain scientifically the essence of capitalist exploitation. They believed the landlord and bourgeoisie monopoly of suffrage to be the sole source of social injustice. This concept keynotes the entire system of views of the Chartists. The social system that would take shape after the victory of the Charter was to incorporate many major categories of bourgeois society: private property, wage labour and capital, purchase and sale of labour power. The National Petition of 1842 proclaimed an intention to guarantee the security of property and the prosperity of commerce.[3] A similar idea was presented in a document adopted by the Convention after Parliament had declined the petition. The appeal of the Chartist Mechanics of Manchester to the Mechanics and Trades of Great Britain among other results to be achieved by the Charter pointed out "...a proper remuneration for labour; security to capital; ...confidence and good-will betwixt employers and workmen; ...justice to all, and injustice to none."[4]

In the opinion of the Chartists, after the abolition of class legislation wages and profits would become fair, and machinery would be so applied as to secure the working man a fair share of the benefit. Radical changes in the system of distribution were to be carried out

---

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 309.

[2] *The Northern Star*, May 21, 1842; April 23, 1842; *The London Chartist Monthly Magazine*, No. 2, July 1843, p. 36.

[3] *Times*, May 3, 1842.

[4] *The Northern Star*, July 9, 1842.

without the abolition of private ownership of the means of production—a concept consistent with the Chartists' Utopian views of future society, where, once class legislation was abolished the irreconcilability of the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat would disappear and "universal justice" would triumph. Engels wrote in 1845: "The working-men will carry their Charter, naturally; but meanwhile they will learn to see clearly with regard to many points which they can make by means of it and of which they now know very little."[1]

The Chartists struggled to attain political power which they regarded as an instrument for radical social reforms. However, they interpreted the political power of the working class as legislation fair to all, or democracy for all. The social views of the Chartists, who presumed that a democratic constitution would dispose of the antagonisms of the capitalist system were Utopian. But the specifically proletarian revolutionary content of Chartism extended beyond the limits of the traditional categories of natural law and constitutionality. To a still lesser extent it was confined to these limits in practice, in the course of the class struggle. For example, the Chartists, while allowing for the abstract possibility of an alliance with the bourgeoisie in the struggle for the Charter, opposed such an alliance each time it was to take a concrete form, realising that in that situation it could amount only to the subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, the political death of the former. Thus, political practice showed that the basis of Chartist ideology was its proletarian revolutionary aspect.

The idea of struggle for political power of the working class advanced by the Chartists was a surmise rather than a conclusion drawn from a scientific theory. Its appearance, therefore, did not mean an end of the bourgeois democratic illusions. Both views of the political aim of the movement (government of the workers as an instrument for implementing radical social reforms and the idea of democracy for all), mutually exclusive from a scientific point of view, coexisted in the ideology of the Chartists. It should be borne in mind, however, that the prevailing tendency in the historical development at that time was the deliverance of the working class from bourgeois influence, its conversion into a class for itself; the proletariat was waging a revolutionary class struggle and was getting rid of its illusions in the course of this struggle.

The main content of Chartist ideology was formed of the conclusions drawn by the working class from its own socio-political experience. In both the political and social fields it was enveloped in bourgeois democratic views. This was perhaps the main, most general

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 524-25.

and deep-going contradiction of the ideology of revolutionary Chartism in its heyday.

It is a question, however, of the contradiction in the system of views of the mass of the workers who came forward against the bourgeoisie rather than together with it and under its leadership. Therefore, the vague "right to political power" and "the state above classes" meant in effect a struggle to make the proletariat the ruling class, while the indistinct demand for a just social system meant a struggle for principal social change. Coming out against the monopolies, the proletariat would inevitably have to come up against the capitalist foundation of the mode of production—private property. In consequence of that the objective content of the tasks the Chartists outlined for future legislators was of a proletarian revolutionary character. In other words, though they lacked a scientific theory the Chartists, nevertheless, were fighters for the basic class interests of the proletariat to a far greater extent than they themselves imagined.

In 1842, the well-known Whig historian and politician, T. Macaulay, referring to a demand presented in the second Chartist petition, said in Parliament: "The petitioners and those who supported their views in the House of Commons talked of class legislation at the very time they were for giving to one class exclusive absolute power. The effect of granting the petition would be to put all property in every city, in every village, in every part of the country at the feet of the labouring class."[1]

The enactment of universal suffrage would have led to the consolidation of bourgeois democracy and capitalist property relations only if Chartism had not existed as a powerful revolutionary movement of the working class which had won and was upholding its independence, if the struggle for the Charter had not meant protest actions by the workers against the bourgeois system, in defence of their own interests. In the period of revolutionary Chartism the working class movement for suffrage was objectively a struggle for political power with a view to attaining social change.

Engels regarded Chartism as a step forward towards communist views.

In his opinion, expressed in 1845, in England combination of socialism with Chartism was bound to take place in the near future, and the process was already beginning.[2] Engels believed that in its Owenite form, existing at the time, socialism could never win widespread popularity among the working class; for this it had to revert "to the Chartist standpoint"[3] for a certain period, "to descend from

[1] *The Times*, May 4, 1842.

[2] See Frederick Engels, "The Condition of the Working Class in England", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 526.

[3] Ibid.

its heights", while remaining nonetheless socialism. Engels further develops this idea, indicating that such socialism is professed, in particular, by "many Chartist ... leaders (who are nearly all Socialists)". In 1892 Engels gave a clue to this thesis: "Socialists, naturally, in the general, not the specifically Owenistic sense."[1] "The union of Socialism with Chartism," from the viewpoint Engels expressed in the book *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* (1845) was identical to the reproduction of "French communism in an English manner".[2] Since Engels pointed out that this merger had already taken place, at least among the leaders of Chartism, who were socialists in the general sense of the word, it follows, therefore, that this socialism of the leaders of Chartism was, according to Engels, reproduction of French communism in the conditions of England. At the same time, Engels, who was thoroughly familiar with the Chartists' views, clearly saw that even such left-wing Chartists as Harney were not champions of the community of property. Nevertheless, in the final section of the book, where Engels describes the prospects of England, he reiterates: "... and most of the Chartist leaders are, moreover, already Communists."[3] This statement was not just a slip of the tongue or an overoptimistic declaration. It only expressed the rightfully extended interpretation of the terms "socialism" and "communism". The limits of these notions here were widened exactly as much as was necessary to include the ideology of revolutionary Chartism.

Describing the meeting in London on September 22, 1845, where the Fraternal Democrats association was founded, Engels wrote in the article *The Festival of Nations in London* at the end of 1845: "No special arrangements had been made to attract a particular kind of audience; there was nothing to indicate that anything would be expressed other than what the London Chartists understood by democracy. We can therefore certainly assume that the majority of the meeting represented the mass of the London Chartist proletarians fairly well. And this meeting accepted communist principles ... with unanimous enthusiasm."[4] In the above-mentioned article Engels put French communism and English Chartism on the same footing. He regarded them as a result of the development of modern democracy engendered by the French Revolution and opposed them to the principles of the German "true socialists". Chartism, which was not in favour of the community of property, and worker communism, in which the community of property was one of the cardinal ideas,

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 526.
[2] Ibid., p. 527.
[3] Ibid., p. 582.
[4] Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 14.

were again assessed as phenomena of the same order. Engels explained this seeming paradox as follows: "Democracy has become the proletarian principle, the principle of the masses. The masses may be more or less clear about this, the only correct meaning of democracy, but all have at least an obscure feeling that social equality of rights is implicit in democracy. The democratic masses can be safely included in any calculation of the strength of the communist forces."[1]

Engels also emphasised here the special significance of the most radical faction of Chartism—G. J. Harney's Democratic Association. To this faction the transfer of government into the hands of the proletariat meant the establishment of a democratic republic on the basis of the Jacobin constitution of 1793. Harney's faction rejected any alliance with the bourgeoisie and deemed it possible to use against the oppressor those means of violence that the latter used against the proletarians. Engels wrote that the Democratic Association "greatly contributed to stimulating the energy of the Chartist movement and to developing its latent communist elements".[2]

In 1885, in an analysis of the initial period of the independent German labour movement (1836-1852), Engels noted that after the materialistic view on history had been developed communism among the French and Germans, and Chartism among the English no longer seemed an accident that might well have been non-existent. "These movements now presented themselves as a movement of the modern oppressed class, the proletariat, as the more or less developed forms of its historically necessary struggle against the ruling class, the bourgeoisie; as forms of the class struggle, but distinguished from all earlier class struggles by this one thing, that the present-day oppressed class, the proletariat, cannot achieve its emancipation without at the same time emancipating society as a whole from division into classes and, therefore, from class struggles."[3]

Worker communism in France and Germany and the system of views of revolutionary Chartism in England played an important part in the struggle of the working class for political independence. What is more, they were a theoretical expression of this independence to the extent that could exist in the pre-Marxian period in general. For all the weak points intrinsic to these views they can be described on the whole as a very important theoretical step made by the working class on the eve of the emergence of Marxism, as a step directly approaching it. Although they were the result of the historically conditioned "deadlocked" development of the revolutionary part

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 5.
[2] Ibid., p. 7.
[3] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 179.

of Utopian socialism, their contribution to the progressive advance of the proletariat to class independence was quite substantial. The relentless criticism of the capitalist system from the positions of the oppressed classes in general and the wage-labourers in particular; the impassioned advocacy of the ideas of social change; the attitude to the bourgeoisie as the enemy of the working class and all working people; the development of the revolutionary traditions of 1793 combined with an ardent desire to apply them for the benefit of the oppressed and exploited classes; the search for a social force the champions of remaking society could rely upon; the striving to overthrow the existing system by revolutionary means; historical optimism and the striving to awaken the energy of the masses—all these constitute an indisputable historical contribution of worker communism and revolutionary Chartism. As pointed out in the foregoing, individual brilliant conjectures of worker Communists and Chartists, their individual "themes" sounded later in the majestic symphony of scientific socialism. In it, however, these themes assumed a fundamentally different meaning. Worker communism and the system of views of revolutionary Chartism represented progressive views formed by the emerging working class and its ideologists in the pre-Marxian period.

PROUDHON: EVOLUTION TOWARDS BOURGEOIS REFORMISM

Another system of views, which initially claimed proximity to worker communism, took shape outside this current and underwent evolution towards bourgeois reformism. Its origination is associated with Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), whose views later played an important role in the European labour movement.

Proudhon's first large work, *What Is Property?* (1840), though replete with contradictions, was of certain progressive significance. The main contribution of the young Proudhon was that in contrast to the previous schools of political economy "he takes the *human semblance* of the economic relations seriously and sharply opposes it to their *inhuman reality*". Remaining on the soil of political economy, he sought to disprove the views of the bourgeois economists upholding the stability of the principles of private ownership and attacking only isolated abuses of it. Proudhon depicted "as the falsifier of economic relations not this or that particular kind of private property ... but private property as such and in its entirety."[1] In other words, *What Is Property?* was a book in which the institu-

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 33.

tion of private property was subjected to criticism from the positions of political economy and, in this sense, scientific criticism. The author attempted to reveal the character of the economic relations based on private property.

The ideas expressed by Proudhon at that time connected him to a definite extent with the French Socialists and Communists. In 1844 Marx compared the views of the young Proudhon with those of Weitling, whose "brilliant writings", in Marx's assessment, "as regards theory are often superior even to those of *Proudhon*, however much they are inferior to the latter in their execution."[1] Somewhat earlier Engels had described Proudhon's book as "the most philosophical work, on the part of the Communists, in the French language".[2]

In 1865 Marx substantially developed and supplemented his assessment of Proudhon's *What Is Property?* He did justice to Proudhon's "withering criticism", his, betrayed here and there, "deep and genuine feeling of indignation at the infamy of what exists, revolutionary earnestness".[3] In addition to that Marx showed that in his book Proudhon criticised society from the standpoint of the French small peasant (Proudhon expressed himself in favour of preserving small property, "possessions") and at the same time applied to this society a scale borrowed from the socialists. Further, Marx wrote, Proudhon in his book dealing in effect with the problem of modern bourgeois property, instead of criticism of the real production relations of property, slid to criticism of the general legal notion of "property".

The above-given assessments of Proudhon's book by the founders of Marxism complement each other. In 1840 Proudhon staked a kind of a claim to criticism of social relations based on private property; he showed that as a legal notion it ran counter to the standards of law—natural and really existing, as well as to the conclusions of bourgeois political economy. Rejection of private ownership interpreted as a source of social evil had the significance of revolutionary propaganda. For a certain period of time it placed Proudhon on a par with the Utopian Communists who deduced their negation of private property from the idea of equality and natural law. The Utopian Communists, who did not challenge bourgeois political economy, remained true to their schemes. As for Proudhon, while planning to create a "new political economy" and regarding economic categories as eternal ideas, he, who in 1840 had declared war on private property in general, in his next large work (*Philosophy of Poverty, or*

[1] Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 201.
[2] Ibid., p. 399.
[3] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 25.

the System of Economic Contradictions, 1846) dealt a blow at his own vague and idealistic criticism of private property.

Proudhon concluded that it was possible to create a society of justice on the basis of private property freed from abuse. In other words, the negation of "private property in general" by jurisprudential criticism and attempts to deduce from Ricardo's system an economic substantiation of the idea of equality, when applied by Proudhon to the capitalist mode of production, amounted to a recognition of private property as an eternal category. His inability to see in economic categories a theoretical expression of production relations corresponding to certain stages in the development of production brought Proudhon to a combination of socialism and bourgeois political economy, turning him into a bourgeois socialist. Not only did he fail to overcome the Utopianism of his views which had originally made him akin to a certain extent to worker Communists, but he became a bourgeois Utopian. Without renouncing the idea of remaking society, he, however, left his revolutionary zeal behind him and became a reformist. His bourgeois social-reformism found practical expression in his advocacy of organising an exchange between small producers—a panacea called upon to substitute for the political and economic struggle of the working class. Proudhon never came out for the principle of community. Even in his first major work he set forth the task of creating a "synthesis of community and property".

In 1846, Marx invited Proudhon to take part in the activities of the Brussels Communist Correspondence Committee. Proudhon replied with a letter clearly expressing his negative attitude to the idea of revolutionary remaking of society. He, Proudhon, had long believed that a reform could not be implemented without a "blow which was formerly called a revolution and is simply an upheaval". Now, however, he had abandoned this point of view. "I think that we have no need for this to achieve success and that, we, therefore, should not present revolutionary action as a means of social reform, because this imaginary means is simply a recourse to force, to despotism, in short, a contradiction. I pose the problem in this way: to use one economic combination to restore to society the wealth it has lost as a result of another economic combination."[1]

Thus, Proudhon's system of views turned into a reactionary Utopian and objectively anti-communist doctrine, and Proudhon himself, having renounced his vague "revolutionary delusions", went over to anti-revolutionary positions.

In the same year 1846 Engels informed Marx in detail of Proud-

[1] Armand Cuvillier, *Proudhon*, Éditions sociales internationales, Paris, 1937, p. 117.

hon's reformist enterprise in organising a new system of exchange between small producers.

When at the end of 1846 Marx read Proudhon's new book *Philosophy of Poverty*, which had just come off the press, its author was no longer at the cross-roads. It became clear to Marx that this was a full-fledged petty-bourgeois system of views presupposing the preservation of bourgeois society based on private property—but without its antagonisms, without inequitable exchange and bank interest, without competition, without a usurer's credit, without unemployment—in other words, the preservation of capital without its evils. This petty-bourgeois doctrine was directly opposed to communism and offered to the workers as an alternative to it.

In a letter to Annenkov Marx levied severe criticism against the views of the author of *Philosophy of Poverty*, showing convincingly how Proudhon's historical idealism had led him to reactionary conclusions in the socio-political field. "From head to foot Mr. Proudhon is the philosopher and economist of the lower middle class."[1] In the book *The Poverty of Philosophy. Answer to 'The Philosophy of Poverty' by M. Proudhon* (1847) Marx comprehensively revealed the theoretical untenability of Proudhon's basic ideas which had already taken shape by that time. He defined the class essence of the latter's views as follows: "a code of petty-bourgeois socialism."

* * *

The practical and theoretical struggle of the proletariat in the pre-Marxian period may be described as the progress of the working class towards political independence. This activity of the proletariat and its ideologists was one of the most important subjects of study by Marx and Engels, who were laying the basis for a materialistic interpretation of history in the last years of that period.

Marx and Engels did not separate worker communism from the real movement of the proletariat. In their view, the first was the theoretical product of the second, and they believed that proletarian criticism of the existing order and the practices of proletarian struggle were consistent with one another. They already arrived at these conclusions in 1843-1844 in the process of their close studies of the working-class movement and proletarian socialist literature. They regarded Chartism as nothing else but "a political expression of labour opinion". Assessing the English and French labour movements, they stated: "This communist criticism had practically at once as its

[1] "Marx to P. V. Annenkov, December 28, 1846", Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, pp. 38-39.

counterpart the movement of the *great mass*, in opposition to which history has been developing so far."[1]

Worker communism and Chartism, which stemmed from the movement of the proletariat, were its supreme theoretical achievement in the pre-Marxian period. However, when relatively developed forms of labour struggle (practical and theoretical) made their appearance, not only its potential but also its weaknesses characteristic of that period became clearly manifest. This was attributable to the absence of a scientific theory which could have helped the workers understand the laws governing the development of bourgeois society, and their role in this development. The absence of such a theory created for a certain period of time an impasse, from which even the front-ranking proletarians were unable to disentangle themselves by their own efforts; their mentality was still under the influence of the ideas of egalitarianism and Utopian socialism. On the other hand, the formative stage and the level of the class struggle attained by the proletariat by the 1840s constituted one of the fundamental conditions for the emergence of scientific socialism. The proletarian revolutionary movement of the 30s and the earlier half of the 40s and its endeavours for theoretical self-expression in many respects laid the groundwork for Marxism and were the prelude to it.

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, International Publishers, New York, 1976, Vol. 4, p. 84.

Part Two

THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT AND THE FOUNDING OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

Chapter 6

THE EMERGENCE OF MARXISM. THE BIRTH OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF THE PROLETARIAT

THE GREATEST REVOLUTION IN SCIENCE

Historical development conditioned the possibility and necessity of the formation of a truly scientific system—Marxism, which became a theoretical instrument in the working-class struggle for its emancipation, for remaking all society on communist lines. Examining the conditions of the emergence of Marxism, one may distinguish objective historical prerequisites of a dual kind: the material prerequisites and the theoretical sources.[1] Besides, also important were some of the subjective prerequisites: the personal merits of the originators of the new ideology, Marx and Engels, the specific development of their views.

As Lenin pointed out, Marxism evolved by no means "*away from* the high road of the development of world civilisation". On the contrary, it was a direct extension of the main lines of the development of philosophy, political economy, socialist and communist ideas.[2] The principal theoretical sources of Marxism were the major achievements of philosophical, economic, socialist and communist thought in the latter half of the 18th century and the earlier half of the 19th. What is more, the most fundamental achievements of natural science and historiography of the 19th century were summed up in Marxist philosophy, the dialectical and historical materialism.[3]

---

[1] For the historical prerequisites and theoretical sources of Marxism see: Frederick Engels' Introduction to his *Anti-Dühring* (Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, pp. 25-39) and V. I. Lenin's work *The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism* (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Moscow, 1973, pp. 23-28).

[2] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 23.

[3] In *Anti-Dühring* Engels clearly points to the dual origin of scientific socialism: on the one hand, it was generated by the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, a reflection of the material conditions of contemporary bourgeois society and, on the other hand, "like every new theory, modern

As the pinnacle of the development of progressive scientific thought Marxism arose at a junction of several sciences and ideological trends—philosophy, history, political economy, socialist and communist doctrines, and natural science. The founders of scientific communism synthesised the major achievements of German classical philosophy, ranging from Kant to Hegel (dialectical method) and Feuerbach (the materialistic interpretation of the central problem of philosophy), English classical political economy (Smith's and Ricardo's labour theory of value), the great Utopians—Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen and other French, English and German Socialists and Communists (the idea of abolishing private property), French historians of the Restoration period (the theory of class struggle of Guizot, Thierry, Mignet, and Thiers), Lewis H. Morgan (a study of primitive society), and the 19th-century natural science (the three main discoveries which revealed the dialectics of nature: the cell theory of Schleiden and Schwann, the law of conservation and transformation of energy discovered and developed by Mayer, Joule, Colding, Grove and Helmholtz, and Darwin's theory of evolution). The greater part of all these achievements had already been assimilated by Marxism in its inception period, the others, mainly in the field of natural science, were used in the course of its development.

The synthesis, the creative interpretation of these major achievements of human thought from the angle of the objective requirements of the class struggle of the proletariat and all further development of human society resulted in a series of outstanding discoveries by Marx and Engels, which led to the emergence of Marxism as a fundamentally new, integral system. In accordance with its three main theoretical sources, Marxism arose as a unity of its three component parts—philosophy, political economy and the theory of scientific communism. This, however, is not a mechanical sum total of three sciences, the result of the encyclopaedically diversified activities of their founders, but an organic synthesis of the three components of a single doctrine, each of which is internally linked with the whole.

The synthetic character of Marxism was conditioned in particular by the specific correlation between its theoretical sources and component parts. A definite theoretical source, the main one, corresponds to each component part. This, however, does not exhaust the entire complexity of the correlation. Actually, each theoretical source of Marxism influenced to a variable extent the formation of each of its component parts.

The theoretical sources of scientific communism as a component part of Marxism include not only the socialist and communist ideas

socialism had, at first, to connect itself with the intellectual stock-in-trade ready to its hand". (Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 25.)

of the forerunners of Marx and Engels but also the philosophical, historical and economic sources of Marxism. Without conscious, i.e., theoretically comprehended, dialectics, this main achievement of German classical philosophy, it would have been impossible to evolve either dialectical materialism or the theory of scientific communism. Indeed, to convert communism from a Utopia into a science it was necessary to learn the laws governing the development of human society, and this was achieved through the materialistic interpretation of history. As is known, the object of study determines its method. The more complex the object of study, the more perfect its method should be. Human society and its history are among the most complex objects of cognition. Therefore, only the application of the dialectical method could yield fruitful results here. Engels pointed out that "scientific socialism ... could arise only in a nation, whose classical philosophy had preserved the living tradition of conscious dialectics, i.e., in Germany. The materialistic interpretation of history and its special application to the contemporary class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was made possible exclusively by means of dialectics". "...We German socialists," he said, "are proud to trace our origin not only to Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen but also to Kant, Fichte and Hegel."[1]

The objective prerequisites—material and theoretical—could lead to the formation of a new world outlook only as a result of the theoretical work of men of brilliant intelligence and noble civic merits. These men were the founders of scientific communism, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. As Engels emphasised repeatedly, Marx played the decisive role in the formation of the new world outlook. Therefore, Engels said, our theory "rightly bears his name".[2]

Marx as a thinker was a remarkably talented person, which was expressed in his encyclopaedically diversified theoretical studies. Genius, however, is not only a gift of nature but also a product of work. His natural giftedness was multiplied by his extraordinary powers of work, which yielded practical fruit in his enormous literary legacy. At the same time, the amazing versatility of Marx was organically supplemented by the undivided purpose, to which, in the final analysis, all his theoretical and practical activities were fully subordinated. This great purpose was the emancipation of the working class. As a scientist Marx was distinguished by exceptional scientific honesty, combined with infinite courage, determination and revolutionary dedication. All this enabled him to perform the

---

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1962, Bd. 19, S. 187-88.

[2] Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 361.

greatest revolution in science, relying on the major achievements of human thought.

The same qualities were also characteristic of Engels, who was linked with Marx by truly legendary friendship and collaboration for almost forty years. Such personal friendship and collaboration in theoretical and practical work were based on both the identity of views and on the fact that they largely complemented each other. In the theoretical field this led to a kind of division of labour between them. Therefore, Lenin underscored, "It is impossible to understand Marxism and to propound it fully without taking into account all the works of Engels."[1]

In the course of Marx's and Engels' theoretical work the objective, historically ordained task of evolving the scientific revolutionary Weltanschauung of the working class was accomplished. In order to obtain an understanding of this process it is necessary to trace the development of Marxism in general and of its theory of scientific communism in particular.

THE THEORY OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNISM IN THE MAKING

The development of the materialistic interpretation of history was at the core of the emerging theory of scientific communism. Both processes developed in organic unity, mutually conditioning one another. The materialistic interpretation of history formed as the direct philosophical basis for the theory of scientific communism. It was the dialectical materialistic interpretation of history that on the theoretical plane distinguished scientific communism from all kinds of pre-scientific, Utopian socialist and communist doctrines.

The beginnings of the new Weltanschauung go back to the autumn of 1842. By that time, Marx and Engels, whose views had been developing in similar though somewhat different ways were already consistent dialecticians and revolutionary democrats and were taking an active part in the intellectual and political life of Germany.

In the autumn of 1842, under the influence of his impressions of the plight of the working masses in Germany and as a result of his studies of socialist and communist literature which had become widespread in Germany, Engels turned to communist views. This was pre-scientific, still Utopian but revolutionary communism on the whole. Engels' attention to the material interests and the class struggle of the proletariat predetermined the development of his communist views in the direction of a truly scientific theory. At the end of November Engels left for England, where the study of the classically developed bourgeois society, the position of the working

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 91.

class, the Chartist movement, socialist and communist literature led him a year later to the initial positions of scientific communism.

In the autumn of 1842 Marx also began to embrace communism, thinking along scientific lines from the very outset. On October 15 he became editor of *Rheinische Zeitung* and on the same day wrote an article under the significant title "Communism and the Augsburg *Allgemeine Zeitung*", and a few days later another one, "Debates on the Law on Thefts of Wood". Both evidenced the beginning of his transition to materialism and communism.[1] Marx approached the problem of private property from two different aspects. On the one hand, as the editor of a large daily he had to come face to face with material life relations, the position of the working masses, the role of private property in the life of society, and this caused him to doubt the validity of Hegel's idealistic sociological concept. On the other hand, he had to determine his attitude to the ideas of Communists, who demanded the abolition of private property. That was how his attention focussed on the problem of private property.

After the closing down of *Rheinische Zeitung* Marx, as he himself said, withdrew from the social scene into his study to resolve his nagging doubts over the correctness of Hegelian philosophy. In the spring and summer of 1843 in Kreuznach he subjected to critical analysis Hegel's philosophy of law—the quintessence of the Hegelian sociological concept. At the height of this work he turned his attention to history. He concentrated on the problem of relationship between society and the state, private property and the state, and law. In contrast to Hegel, he drew the conclusion that it is not the state that determines society but, on the contrary, society (the aggregate of material, economic relations) determines the state, i.e., the economic basis determines the political superstructure. This proposition was the point of departure for the future materialistic interpretation of history. Thus, Marx arrived at the conclusion on the determining role of economic relations in society, on the determining role of private property in the existing bourgeois society. From here it followed that a cardinal transformation of this society required the abolition of private property, i.e., the implementation of the main demand of the communists.

In September 1843 the young Marx was, in effect, a communist. In his programme letter to A. Ruge he formulated some fundamental principles of the new communist view. He wrote: "...it is precisely the advantage of the new trend that we do not dogmatically anticipate the world, but only want to find the new world through criticism of the old one." And he appealed for "*ruthless criticism*

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, Vol. 1, pp. 222, 224.

of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be."[1]

In the autumn of 1843 Marx moved to Paris. Here he became directly acquainted with the labour movement, establishing contacts with labour organisations and their leaders and visiting workers' meetings. He started to study thoroughly socialist and communist literature, and to analyse the economic foundation of society.

Marx and Engels openly declared their communist views for the first time in *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* (German-French almanac) published in Paris in February 1844. It featured two articles by Marx and two by Engels and three letters from Marx to Ruge.

In his brilliant, in Marx's later phrase, *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, Engels, proceeding from a consistently dialectical and communist point of view, showed that private property is not an everlasting but a historical phenomenon, and that it can and must be abolished. He proved that private property lies at the basis of all antagonisms of bourgeois society and that the aggravation of these contradictions is bound to lead to a revolution. In Marx's assessment, in his *Outlines* Engels "already formulated some general principles of scientific socialism".[2]

The young Marx's article "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law" became something like his political manifesto. It was in that article that Marx, relying on the results of his criticism of the Hegelian philosophy of law, for the first time drew his conclusion about the world historic mission of the proletariat. This conclusion was preceded by an analysis of the actual correlation between civil society and the state. Having found the basis for the existence and development of society in the sphere of material life relations, Marx also discovered the real force that would accomplish its transformation. It was in the sphere of "civil society" that Marx revealed that class—the proletariat, which by virtue of objective causes can and must throw off the chains of exploitation and deliver all society from the oppressors and the oppressed. He arrived at this conclusion through an analysis of the existing social relations, the class structure, the position, role and distinctive traits of various classes, as well as by summing up historical experience, especially the class struggle in the era of the French bourgeois revolution of the late 18th century. In particular, in analysing this experience, Marx established a certain coincidence between the interests of the revolutionary class and the objective trends of social development, as

[1] K. Marx, "Letters from the *Deutch-Französische Jahrbücher*", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 142.

[2] Marx/Engels, "Vorbemerkung zur französischen Ausgabe", *Werke*, Bd. 19, S. 181.

a result of which in the epoch of the revolution the class performing it represents all of the remaining society.

In its original form the idea of the world historic role of the proletariat was still abstract. General considerations concerning the class polarisation of society played an important role in its substantiation. The revolutionary spirit of the proletariat was associated with its social position of the most impoverished and oppressed class[1]. Even in its original form, however, the idea of the world historic mission of the proletariat was a great theoretical discovery, the first step in finding out one of the decisive prerequisites of the future revolution.

In the article "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction" Marx also proclaimed the need for a union between the revolutionary class and the revolutionary theory: "The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism by weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses.... As philosophy finds its *material* weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *spiritual* weapons in philosophy."[2]

Whereas Marx's articles in *Rheinische Zeitung* showed the beginning of his transition from idealism to materialism and from revolutionary democratism to communism, in *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* this process was completed.[3]

Engels came to similar results at that time. Of special interest are his three articles under the common title "The Condition of England" written between January and March 1844 on the basis of a profound analysis of the labour and socialist movement in that country. Summing up his observations, Engels found a link between the economy, the class structure of society and politics. He came close to the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and, analysing the historical significance of the Industrial Revolution in England, arrived at a conclusion that would become one of the central ideas in his article *The Condition of England. I. The Eighteenth Century*: "This revolution through which British industry has passed is the foundation of every aspect of modern English life, the driving force behind all social development. ... The most important effect of the eighteenth century for England was the creation of the proletariat by the industrial revolution."[4]

In the spring and summer of 1844, after the closing down of *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, Marx undertook the first serious attempt to sum up his economic studies and at the same time to substantiate

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag Berlin, 1969, Bd. 1, S. 386, 391.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 182, 187.
[3] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 80.
[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 485, 487.

scientifically those communist ideas which he and Engels had put forward on the pages of the almanac. For this purpose, between April and August he wrote one of his most profound works—*The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.

Central to this work is, in effect, the very same fundamental problem of private property and its abolition. Relying on his former investigations and on Engels' ideas expressed in his *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, Marx made a significant step forwad here in disclosing the laws governing the functioning and development of human society.

Just as Engels in his *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, Marx, relying on his comprehension of the historic and, hence, transient, character of private property, levies criticism against the unhistoricity of bourgeois political economy.[1]

Bourgeois economists, he says, proceed from the fact of the existence of private property, regarding it as natural and eternal. They give no explanation of this fact, and its recognition as something inevitable is the tacit prerequisite for all their theoretical constructions. Marx sets himself the aim of exposing the causes engendering private property, of identifying the conditions of its existence and hence the conditions required for its abolition. In coping with this problem he comes to understand deeper the laws governing the functioning and development of human society and provides a more profound substantiation for the need to abolish private property and for the communist world outlook in general.

Behind private property Marx discovers a deeper-rooted basis for the existence of bourgeois class society—the specific distinctions of labour, its alienation expressed in that the product of labour passing as property into strange hands opposes the working man and dominates him, that work itself performed under duress becomes alien to the working man, that economic alienation leads to all other forms of alienation—the alienation of man from man, the alienation of man's social forces, the alienation of the state from society, religious alienation, etc. In the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* Marx arrives at the conclusion on the determining role of production in the life of society: "Religion, family, state, law, morality, science, art, etc., are only *particular* modes of production and fall under its general law."[2]

Thus, he approaches along several lines his fundamental discovery in the field of the materialistic interpretation of history—

[1] In contrast to the Utopians, Marx, as a dialectician and a materialist, realised the historical necessity of private property: "...*human* life required *private property* for its realisation ... now it requires the supersession of private property". (Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 321.)

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 297.

the establishment of the correlation between productive forces and production relations, the discovery of the dialectics of their interaction and development.

Relying on these results, Marx develops a full complex of important communist ideas. Here he begins his first concrete investigation of the relations between labour and capital, between the worker and the capitalist. Marx proves that the emancipation of society from private property results in the political form of emancipation of the workers, because their emancipation implies mankind's emancipation, and this happens, he says, because "... the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and all relations of servitude are but modifications and consequences of this relation."[1]

Marx expressed his very high assessment of the successes of the working-class movement, with which he set up direct contacts in Paris: "In this practical process the most splendid results are to be observed whenever French socialist workers are seen together. ...The brotherhood of man is no mere phrase with them, but a fact of life, and the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies."[2] At the same time, he writes to Feuerbach: "You would have to attend one of the meetings of the French workers to appreciate the pure freshness, the nobility which burst forth from these toil-worn men.... It is among these 'barbarians' of our civilised society that history is preparing the practical element for the emancipation of mankind."[3]

Marx regards the future revolutionary remaking of society based on private property as a protracted and complex process of abolishing all kinds of alienation, as the formation of a society where all-round and free development of the individual will become a reality as a realm of genuine humanism.

Marx envisages different stages in the forthcoming remaking of society (here for the first time he even draws in embryo a differentiation between the two developmental phases of future communist society), and predicts the difficulties of this process. "In order to abolish the *idea* of private property," he emphasised, "the *idea* of communism is quite sufficient. It takes *actual* communist action to abolish actual private property. History will lead to it; and this movement, which *in theory* we already know to be a self-transcending movement, will constitute in actual fact a very rough and protracted process."[4]

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 280.
[2] Ibid., p. 313.
[3] Karl Marx, "To Ludwig Feuerbach", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 355.
[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 313.

The traditions of the determined demarcation of Marxism from the crudely egalitarian barrack-room communism go back to *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. From the very outset Marx regarded this kind of communism not only as a tactic but as a doctrine based on the idea of a certain "minimum", "*a definite, limited* standard"[1], the rigid limits of the development of both human society and the individual. Hence the reduction to a minimum of the criteria of social progress, the substitution of a subjective, arbitrary meaning for their objective content. Marx points out, "The community is only a community of *labour* and the equality of *wages* paid out by communal capital...."[2]

In Marx's idea, the objective sources of primitive communism are first and foremost an extremely low degree of the development of social relations, when the negation of property means not elevation above its level but rather the need "to reach it".[3] "This type of communism—since it negates the *personality* of man in every sphere—is but the logical expression of private property, which is this negation.... The thought of every piece of private property as such is—*at least* turned against *wealthier* private property in the form of envy and the urge to reduce things to a common level.... Crude communism is only the culmination of this envy and ... of levelling-down...."[4] And further: "...*crude* communism—is thus merely a *manifestation* of the vileness of private property, which wants to set itself up as the *positive community system.*"[5]

Hence, the orientation—characteristic of vulgar communism—on the past instead of the future, its idealisation of the historically extinct forms of human association.

While Marx was busy with his work on *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* the Silesian weavers revolted in Germany. Marx came out in defence of the insurgents. His special article on this historic event carried a number of profound ideas concerning the labour movement and its worldwide historic significance. He pointed out the need to study the experience of this labour uprising and clearly emphasised that "...*socialism* cannot be realised without *revolution*".[6]

In late August and early September 1844, Marx and Engels met in Paris, and thus began their lifelong friendship and co-operation. From that time, when the full identity of their views became clear,

---

[1] Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1975, p. 295.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid., p. 296.
[6] Ibid. p. 206.

the theoretical activities of the founders of scientific communism merged into an organic, indivisible whole.

The first fruit of their collaboration was *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism* (September-November 1844), a book written in the main, it is true, by Marx and published in 1845. Developing in it a number of fundamental ideas of scientific communism, Marx often drew upon his unpublished *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.

In *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism*, the idea of the historic mission of the proletariat was further profoundly developed. In the course of objective historical development, the authors say, an antagonism between the proletariat and private property arises and intensifies. A moment arrives inevitably when "the proletariat executes the sentence that private property pronounces on itself by producing the proletariat".[1] After the victory of the proletariat both aspects of the antagonism cease to exist: by abolishing private property the proletariat radically changes and ceases to be a proletariat. That was the birth of the Marxist idea of the revolution as a dual process—a change in social relations and a change in the people themselves.

One of the key propositions of scientific communism is formulated in the book: "...the proletariat can and must emancipate itself."[2] By emancipating itself it emancipates the whole society. It cannot emancipate itself without emancipating the whole society. Here the authors also set forth another crucially important proposition—drawing a distinction between the being of the proletariat and its awareness of its being, between the level of its development and its objective historical predestination, its mission of worldwide historic importance: "It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat at the moment *regards* now as its aim. It is a question of *what the proletariat is*, and what, in accordance with this *being*, it will historically be compelled to do."[3] These propositions, Lenin believed, contain "Marx's view—already almost fully developed—concerning the revolutionary role of the proletariat" and "the chief thing in the doctrine of Marx is that it brings out the historic role of the proletariat as the builder of socialist society".[4]

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, New York, 1976, p. 36.

[2] Ibid., p. 37.

[3] Ibid.

[4] V. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of the Book 'The Holy Family' by Marx and Engels", *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, Moscow, 1976, p. 26. V. I. Lenin, "The Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Moscow, 1968, p. 582.

This complex of ideas was organically supplemented with the formulation of one of the major laws of the revolutionary process: "Together with the thoroughness of the historical action, the size of the mass whose action it is will therefore increase."[1]

This means that the deeper the revolutionary transformations, the wider the masses performing them. This means that the proletarian revolution, the most radical revolution in the history of human society, will not only be the cause of the proletariat itself but will be carried out by the broadest masses. This means that as the communist transformation of society will deepen, the mass implementing this unprecedented remaking of the whole human society will grow.

In *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism* Marx shows that materialism forms the philosophical basis for communism. In their next joint work, *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels develop a comprehensive dialectical materialistic interpretation of history as the solid philosophical foundation of the theory of scientific communism.

While Marx was completing *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism* in Paris, Engels, having returned to Germany, started summing up his observations and the results of his study of social relations in England. He began work on one of his fundamental books, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* (September 1844-March 1845).

In the Introduction, Engels clearly formulates the proposition regarding the historical importance of the Industrial Revolution he had first drawn in February 1844.[2] In establishing the correlation between it and the revolution in civil society he came to the discovery of the dialectics of productive forces and production relations.

Uncovering the organic link between the development of large-scale industry and the modern industrial proletariat, between the labour movement and the socialist and communist ideas, Engels proved conclusively that the labour movement is logically concentrated in large cities and that it is precisely the proletariat brought into being by large-scale industry that is the core, the leading force of the entire working class. He proved that historical movement is headed—at first only by right and later in fact—by the working class, that a proletarian, communist revolution is necessary and inevitable.

The chapter "The Labour Movements" is especially important; in it, Engels, in analysing the main phases in the development

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, New York, 1976, p. 82.

[2] See Frederick Engels, "The Condition of the Working-Class in England", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, New York, 1976, p. 307.

of the class struggle of the proletariat, describes strikes as an indispensable school of struggle and substantiates the major proposition on the need to combine socialism with the labour movement.

Engels' book was an outstanding contribution to the theory of the working-class movement. Lenin, as a young Marxist, expressed his high appreciation of *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* in the year of its author's death. He wrote: "Even before Engels, many people had described the sufferings of the proletariat and had pointed to the necessity of helping it. Engels was the *first* to say that the proletariat is *not only* a suffering class; that it is, in fact, the disgraceful economic condition of the proletariat that drives it irresistibly forward and compels it to fight for its ultimate emancipation. And the fighting proletariat *will help itself*. The political movement of the working class will inevitably lead the workers to realise that their only salvation lies in socialism. On the other hand, socialism will become a force only when it becomes the aim of the *political* struggle of the working *class*. Such are the main ideas of Engels' book on the condition of the working class in England, ideas which have now been adopted by all thinking and fighting proletarians but which at that time were entirely new. These ideas were set out in a book written in absorbing style and filled with most authentic and shocking pictures of the misery of the English proletariat. The book was a terrible indictment of capitalism and the bourgeoisie and created a profound impression. Engels' book began to be quoted everywhere as presenting the best picture of the condition of the modern proletariat. And, in fact, neither before 1845 nor after has there appeared so striking and truthful a picture of the misery of the working class."[1]

The decisive stage in the evolution of the new world outlook began in the spring of 1845 when Marx and Engels conceived a new joint work—*The German Ideology*. By that time, Marx had already formed in general outline the main concept of the materialistic interpretation of history. So when in April he again met Engels in Brussels where he had moved from Paris, they agreed to work jointly to develop a new world outlook in the form of a critique of the German post-Hegelian philosophy. This plan was implemented in the manuscript of *The German Ideology* written in the main between November 1845 and April 1846.

The significance of the work, its place in the history of Marxism are determined by the fact that here Marx and Engels for the first time developed comprehensively, as an integral concept, Marx' first great discovery, the materialistic interpretation of history, and

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Frederick Engels", *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1977, pp. 22-23.

thereby provided historically the first, philosophical substantiation of the theory of scientific communism.

Their point of departure was one perfectly concrete discovery—establishing the dialectics of productive forces and production relations, which was what enabled them to develop the materialistic interpretation of history as an integral concept. As a consequence, the general structure of human society (productive forces—production relations and other social relations—the political superstructure—the forms of social consciousness) and the general regularities of its historical development (the origination of the theory of social formations) were finally determined. Another result was the conclusion on the need for a proletarian, communist revolution as the outcome of the development of the contradictions between the productive forces and the production relations in bourgeois society.

The materialistic interpretation of history became the methodological basis and the theoretical premise for Marx's studies in political economy, which in the next decade led him to another breakthrough, the discovery of surplus value and the evolvement of the theory of surplus value. The unravelling of the mystery of capitalist exploitation through this new discovery was historically the second, economic and final substantiation of the theory of scientific communism. Thus, these two great discoveries turned socialism from a Utopia into a science.

The development of the materialistic interpretation of history as an integral concept conditioned the integrity of the theory of scientific communism as well. Relying on their new, materialistic sociohistorical concept, the authors of *The German Ideology* also made a number of fundamentally new conclusions in the field of scientific communism.

For instance, when arguing with the idealist Young Hegelians, they formulated an important proposition on the conditions required for real emancipation of people: "Real emancipation cannot be carried out otherwise than in the real world and by real means.... In general, it is impossible to emancipate people as long as they are incapable of providing themselves in full, quantitatively and qualitatively, with food and drink, housing and clothes."[1]

In *The German Ideology* the authors formulate for the first time the central proposition of the theory of scientific communism—that of the two material prerequisites for communist transformation of society. These necessary material prerequisites are a high level of the development of productive forces and the formation of a revolution-

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Feuerbach. The Opposition of the Materialistic and Idealistic Concepts.* (New edition of the first chapter of *The German Ideology.*) Moscow, 1966, p. 32 (in Russian).

ary class. Further on, Marx and Engels specified the first prerequisite: the communist transformation of society becomes possible only at the stage of large-scale industry and only when it has reached a sufficiently high level of development. At certain stages of the development of productive forces private property was indispensable. At the stage of large-scale industry, however, it turned into their shackles. Therefore, now it must and already can be abolished in the interest of further developing production. "...Only with large-scale industry does the abolition of private property become possible".[1]

The second prerequisite is specified accordingly: only with the formation of the industrial proletariat does it become possible to remake society on communist lines.

Attempts to abolish private property when no objective material prerequisites for this are yet available can only lead to the universal spread of poverty; "the struggle for necessities would begin again, and the old filthy business would necessarily be restored."[2] No good intentions can substitute for the necessary material prerequisites of a revolution. "Men," Marx said, "build a new world for themselves ... from the historical achievements of their declining world. In the course of their development they first have to *produce the material conditions* of a new society itself, and no exertion of mind or will can free them from this fate."[3]

The analysis of the problem of the material prerequisites for remaking society on communist principles was a decisive step forward also in the process of substantiating and developing the idea of the historic mission of the proletariat. It is clear that this idea, advanced in *The German Ideology* heralded the beginning of development of the Marxist teaching on the material prerequisites for a proletarian revolution. The further allround elaboration of the concept of the historic mission of the proletariat as the builder of a new, communist society extended far beyond the framework of the problem of material prerequisites.

Having discovered the dialectics of productive forces and production relations, Marx and Engels analysed both the deep-rooted material foundations of the historic mission of the proletariat and the dialectical interconnection between the two main material prerequisites for remaking society on communist lines—the development of productive forces and the formation of a revolutionary class.

The subsequent elaboration on this basis of the Marxist teaching on the prerequisites for and the role of the proletariat in the forth-

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The German Ideology", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Moscow, 1976, p. 64.

[2] Ibid., p. 49.

[3] Karl Marx, "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, London, 1976, pp. 319-20.

coming social revolution was presented in the *Principles of Communism* and the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. In the former Engels for the first time raised the question of the need for the continued development of productive forces in the period of transition from capitalism to communism (socialism) after the proletarian revolution. "Will it be possible to abolish private property at one stroke?" he inquires.

"No, such a thing would be just as impossible as at *one* stroke to increase the existing productive forces to the degree necessary for instituting community of property. Hence, the proletarian revolution, which in all probability is impending, will transform existing society only gradually, and be able to abolish private property only when the necessary quantity of the means of production has been created."[1]

The productive forces, brought into being by the emergence and growth of large-scale industry, had already come in conflict with private property but they were still inadequate for the immediate transition to public economy. From here followed even the purely economic necessity of a transition period.

Thus, the emergence and development of the theory of scientific communism progressed from the discovery of one objective prerequisite for the communist transformation of society to clarifying both prerequisites, from partial conclusions regarding individual countries to a general concept, from the initial abstract premises to a profound and concrete, truly scientific proof of the validity of the Marxist concept.

The next decisive stage in theoretical substantiation of the historic mission of the proletariat was Marx's economic studies, particularly his works of 1857-1867, which ultimately resulted in his main work—*Capital*.

Simultaneously, the founders of scientific communism comprehensively substantiated the significance of such prerequisites for the revolution as a truly scientific theory, the self-awareness of the revolutionary class, the organisation of a revolutionary party. Their integrated approach to the problem of prerequisites was based on their dialectical materialistic understanding of the correlation between the objective and subjective factors in the historical process.

In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels developed the crucially important idea of the dual character of the revolution as a process of not only restructuring social relations but also of remoulding people themselves. "The revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the *ruling* class cannot be overthrown in any other

[1] Frederick Engels, "Principles of Communism", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1976, Vol. 6, p. 350.

way, but also because the class *overthrowing* it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew." And further: "In revolutionary activity the changing of oneself coincides with the changing of circumstances".[1] Hence it follows that to build a new, communist society it is mandatory not only to abolish private property, not only to develop productive forces comprehensively, but also to modify the individual himself, to create the conditions for his allround development.

In the same work, they advanced for the first time in a most general outline the central idea of the political doctrine of Marxism—the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Here is that first definition: "Every class which is aiming at domination, even when its domination, as is the case with the proletariat, leads to the abolition of the old form of society in its entirety and of domination in general, must first conquer political power...."[2]

Whereas before 1845 Marx and Engels had come close to this conclusion, now they actually made it. Indeed, the political power and class domination to be attained by the proletariat, as is clear from the entire context of *The German Ideology*, by revolutionary means, and then the abolition of private property, classes and thereby class domination—are not these but the main elements of the specifically Marxist teaching of the dictatorship of the proletariat? In contrast to their forerunners (the Babouvists, Blanqui, and Weitling) the founders of scientific communism already at that time interpreted the dictatorship of the proletariat as the dictatorship of a class, and, furthermore, a class created by the development of large-scale industry.

After *The German Ideology* the teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat was developed in different directions. One can only note a few lines traceable in the next two years until the *Communist Manifesto* appeared. Engels, in the article "The Communists and Karl Heinzen" and Marx in "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality" (October 1847) put forward this idea in the press for the first time. Engels in the "Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith" (June 1847), in "The Communists and Karl Heinzen" and in "Principles of Communism" (October 1847) and, finally, Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (December 1847-January 1848) consistently elaborated a programme of activities of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Describing in general outline the course of the forthcoming proletarian revolution in "Principles of Communism" Engels says that this revolution will above all establish a democratic

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The German Ideology", in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 53, 214.
[2] Ibid., p. 47

system, a democratic state, in which the proletariat will be the politically dominating class. Engels envisions two possible variants of its development. Where the proletariat *already* forms *the majority* of the population (for instance, in England), the proletariat will establish its *direct* political rule in the form of democracy. Where the proletariat *does not yet constitute the majority*, and such majority is formed by the proletariat only together with small peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie (such as in France and Germany) the proletariat will establish its *indirect* political rule in the form of democracy.[1] Differentiating between these two variants, Engels takes an important step in evolving the teaching of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the theory of proletarian revolution in general. The very term "the dictatorship of the proletariat" first appeared in Marx's work *The Class Struggles in France* in March 1850.

In *The German Ideology* the authors laid the theoretical foundation for working out the crucially important problem of the international character of the communist revolution. They established that the development of modern productive forces, namely, large-scale industry, had led to two results. First, all countries, particularly the civilised ones, had become dependent on one another (history had really become world history). Second, in all civilised countries, a class structure of an identical type was taking shape and the proletariat and the bourgeoisie were emerging as the main classes. It followed in either case that a communist revolution should take place in every civilised country and would have the character of a common worldwide historical process. This theme was presented in its clearest and most comprehensive form in *Principles of Communism* two years later.

Having established the relationship between the revolutionary processes in different countries the authors of *The German Ideology* arrived at the important conclusion of the possibility for the revolutionary movement in the less developed countries to rely on the achievements of the more developed ones. They note, for instance, that "... to lead to collisions in a country, this contradiction need not necessarily have reached its extreme limit in that particular country", interrelation "with industrially more advanced countries... is sufficient to produce a similar contradiction in countries with a less advanced industry."[2] A similar law operates also within the boundaries of every capitalist country: the vanguard of the industrial proletariat involves the entire class in the revolutionary movement. "It is evident," Marx and Engels write, "that large-scale industry

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 350.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The German Ideology", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 74-75.

does not reach the same level of development in all districts of a country. This does not, however, retard the class movement of the proletariat, because the proletarians created by large-scale industry assume leadership of this movement and carry the whole mass along with them.... The countries in which large-scale industry is developed act in a similar manner upon the more or less non-industrial countries, insofar as the latter are swept by world intercourse into the universal competitive struggle."[1]

Some time later, the application of the same methodological approach enabled Marx and Engels to draw the conclusion on the need for an alliance between the proletariat and other labouring classes, especially in the peasant countries, and on the leading role of the proletariat with regard to its allies. At the same time, they realised the stage-by-stage character of the forthcoming revolutionary process and, therefore, came to the conclusion that an alliance was needed between the Communists and the revolutionary democrats. These ideas were first presented by Engels in the press in October 1857 ("The Communists and Karl Heinzen").

In November of the same year Marx and Engels in the speeches "On Poland" formulated the cardinal principles of a proletarian solution to the national question. National oppression, Marx indicates, is rooted in the existing relations of property in the abolition of which the working class alone has a vested interest; and it alone is capable of accomplishing this. "The victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie is, at the same time, the victory over the national and industrial conflicts which today range the peoples of the various countries against one another in hostility and enmity. And so the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie is at the same time the signal of liberation for all oppressed nations."[2]

This principle, which expresses the objective interconnection between the social emancipation of the proletariat and the liberation of the oppressed nations, formed the basis of the working-class stand on the national question. The class approach to the national question implies, rather than ruling out, the participation of the proletariat in the democratic national movements. "A nation cannot become free and at the same time continue to oppress other nations,"[3] Engels said, emphasising that the working class would play the key role in the victory of democracy and the liberation of the oppressed nations.

Thus, the development of the materialistic interpretation of history as the solid philosophic basis for the theory of scientific

---

[1] Ibid., p. 74.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "On Poland", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 388.
[3] Ibid., p. 389.

communism added a new dimension to the theory of the working-class movement.

The authors failed to get *The German Ideology* published. "We abandoned the manuscript to the gnawing criticism of the mice all the more willingly since we had achieved our main purpose—self-clarification," Marx wrote later.[1] Now the groundwork for Marxist theory had been laid. The theoretical weapon for the working class movement had been developed. Relying on what has been done in the manuscript of *The German Ideology*, Marx wrote *The Poverty of Philosophy* in the earlier half of 1847 and, jointly with Engels in late 1847 and early 1848, the *Communist Manifesto*—the first large printed work of mature Marxism. The process of evolving the theory coming to a close, the process of combining it with the labour movement began. The politically active members of the proletarian class gradually adopted the new Weltanschauung, and the propositions of the theory were embodied in the programme documents of the emerging proletarian party.

Continuing Marx's thought on clarifying the matter for themselves, Engels recalled later: "As soon as we had become clear in our own minds, we set about the task." [2] They started to prepare the conditions for founding a proletarian, communist party.

THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

It was obvious to Marx and Engels that the conversion of the conclusion on the world historic mission of the proletariat from an objective characteristic of the working class into a conscious programme of its revolutionary struggle would not occur spontaneously. It would be a process of difficult and agonising re-evaluation of the old views, theories, forms and ways of social behaviour—a process, though determined by the objective circumstances, that would imply a conscious and purposive struggle to implant within the working class a theory scientifically expressing its vital interests.

The task that followed from this, which confronted Marx and Engels, was, as Engels wrote later, to persuade the European and primarily, the German proletariat of the correctness of their views.

It was not only a question of disseminating the Marxist world outlook through propaganda, although this aspect of the matter was also of immense significance. The problem was to make scientific communism eventually the conscious basis for the class struggle of the proletariat.

---

[1] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971, p. 22.

[2] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 179.

This required in the first place the founding of a proletarian party as an instrument for the ideological and political emancipation of the working class to enable it to perform its role as the leading factor in social progress. "For the proletariat to be strong enough to win on the decisive day," Engels wrote a few years before his death, "it must—and Marx and I have advocated this ever since 1847—form a separate party distinct from all others and opposed to them, a conscious class party."[1]

Whereas the works Marx and Engels wrote in the forties, prior to the *Communist Manifesto*, contain no clearly worded statements of their views on the role of the proletarian party and the ways of forming it, this by no means implies that they had no clear opinion on this question. All their practical political activities in that period evidence that in their struggle for the party they proceeded from the premises based on a theoretical analysis and summation of the experience accumulated in labour struggle.

An analysis of this experience, just as their personal contacts with existing labour organisations convinced Marx and Engels that the proletarian party should meet definite requirements, if it is to live up to its tasks.

The party should be based on a scientific theory opposed to all forms of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology. It should represent the vanguard of the working class, its most forward-looking and intelligent contingent. In the concrete historical conditions of that epoch the revolutionary party could not have a massive membership, because, as Engels recalled years later, "at that time one had to seek out one by one the workers who had an understanding of their position as workers and of their historico-economic antagonism to capital, because this antagonism itself was only just beginning to develop."[2] The same factor, in the absence of any massive revolutionary organisations of the working class on the scale of individual countries, largely determined also the internationalist principle of the party organisation, although what mattered most here was the desire of Marx and Engels to achieve the international unity of the front-ranking elements of the working class on the threshold of a revolution, which, in their opinion, was to break out on an all-European scale.

At the same time, Marx and Engels were aware of the fact that, unable to attract a massive membership, such a party should not turn into a sect shutting itself up in its own shell but be organically linked through a variety of channels with the mass of the working people and influence their movement.

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 386.
[2] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 189.

The fact that Marx and Engels already had a clear-cut programme of struggle for the party does not mean that this process was of a one-track character. In their theoretical and practical activities they were motivated by the actual situation, whose development put up formidable obstacles to the formation of the proletarian party. First of all, the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was insufficiently developed on the whole, the intensity of this antagonism varying from country to country. This seriously hampered the growth of the class self-awareness of the proletariat, the process of its conversion from a class "in itself" into a class "for itself". Another important obstacle was the strong influence of various forms of bourgeois and especially petty-bourgeois ideology on the proletarian masses. Marx and Engels invariably attached prime importance to the struggle against this influence, calling for opposition to various phraseology likely to lessen the awareness of the absolute antagonism between the communist movement and the prevailing social system.

"If ... the theoretical representatives of the proletariat wish their literary activity to have any practical effect, they must first and foremost insist that all phrases are dropped which tend to dim the realisation of the sharpness of this opposition, all phrases which tend to conceal this opposition and may even give the bourgeois a chance to approach the communists for safety's sake on the strength of their philanthropic enthusiasms."[1]

Speaking of the labour movement itself, both the sectarian character of the then associations of workers and craftsmen, on the one hand, and the theoretical immaturity and organisational amorphousness of new mass movements had to be overcome in order to form the party. Therefore, relying on the initial experience of proletarian actions and revolutionary demands, Marx and Engels included it within wider theoretical and historical limits and extended revolutionary theory beyond the limits of the current struggle and the concrete level of awareness of the labour movement in that period.

The implementation of one of the fundamental principles of Marxism, according to which the revolutionary activity of the proletariat can be based exclusively on scientific theory, was the reason for the irreconcilable struggle waged by Marx and Engels, the need for which was not always realised by their followers, against all attempts, even on the part of honest revolutionaries, to place the strategy of the proletariat on a different basis: emotional, religious, Utopian, etc. Such views prevailed within the labour movement at the time. In the discussions which took place in the

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 469.

winter of 1845 in the London Communist Educational Association of German Workers, W. Weitling and H. Kriege opposed the opinion that the communist principle was possible only on a scientific basis. "We should employ all means," Weitling said. "By appealing to the feelings we can persuade many to do what we cannot persuade them to do by appealing to their reason."[1] Roughly a year later some leaders of the League of the Just in London rebuked Marx and Engels for their "lop-sidedness". "Let a philosopher evolve his communism scientifically...," they wrote. "But do not anathemise a champion of sentimental communism dreaming of universal brotherly love. ... Give even religious communism a chance to express itself, do not denounce it out of hand.... Not all are great economists like you, so do not demand of all to understand communism the way you do."[2]

The initial form of the struggle of Marx and Engels for propaganda of scientific communism, an instrument for organising revolutionary forces on a worldwide scale were the communist correspondence committees. The first of them, in Brussels, was set up early in 1846. Its purpose was to maintain permanent ties between the German, French, and English socialists for discussion of the problems of theory, criticism of the Utopian schemes and reaching the unanimity of views. Besides their ideological functions, the communist correspondence committees performed definite organisational tasks to identify and unite the forces that could constitute the core of the international proletarian party. Indeed, forward-looking members of the working class and revolutionary intellectuals who embodied the future of the emancipation movement of the proletariat united within the framework of the committees and around them. Many of them were activists of the Communist League, took part in the revolution of 1848-1849 and later were representatives of the finest traditions of the Communist League, advocates of Marxist ideas in the First International. Among them were the fiery revolutionary publicist Wilhelm Wolff, a teacher by profession, a staunch fighter who remained loyal to the ideas of Marxism as long as he lived, Friedrich Lessner, an ex-officer and later a journalist, Joseph Weydemeyer, who later became one of the pioneers of Marxism in the United States, Georg Weerth, an outstanding German revolutionary poet, Karl Pfänder, a worker and painter, later a member of the General Council of the First International, the watch-maker

[1] *Der Bund der Kommunisten. Dokumente und Materialen*, Band I. 1836-1849, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1970, S. 216.

[2] See *Der Bund der Kommunisten. Dokumente und Materialen*, Band I. 1836-1849, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1970, S. 379.

Joseph Moll and the shoemaker Heinrich Bauer, who together with Karl Schapper headed the League of the Just in London.

Their class awareness increased, and the survivals of the old views were overcome in direct association with Marx and Engels, in the course of theoretical discussions and practical work. For their part the founders of scientific communism learned much from their association with forward-looking representatives of the proletariat, their practical links with the life and struggle of the working class. It was with a feeling of sincere and profound respect that Engels wrote years later about his first meetings with Schapper, Bauer and Moll: "I came to know all three of them in London in 1843. They were the first revolutionary proletarians whom I met, and however far apart our views were at that time in details... I shall never forget the deep impression that these three real men made upon me, who was then still only wanting to become a man."[1]

Marx and Engels attached crucial importance to the establishment of communist correspondence committees. "It is a step," Marx wrote, "which the social movement should take in its *literary* expression in order to free itself of its *national* limitations."[2]

Thanks to the efforts of Marx, Engels and their followers (W. Wolff, J. Weydemeyer, H. Ewerbeck, and others) committees and groups were organised in a few regions of Germany, and contacts were set up with the Parisian communes of the League of the Just. Of great importance was the establishment of the communist correspondence committee in London, which was joined also by the leaders of the League of the Just—K. Schapper, J. Moll, G. Bauer. This made it possible to influence the process of overcoming of the Utopian views which had already got under way in the League.

When the communist correspondence committees were set up, Marx and Engels struggled within their framework to assert scientific socialism as the theoretical foundation of the proletarian movement, against the petty-bourgeois Utopian schemes. As early as March 1846 they sharply criticised Weitling's pseudo-revolutionary appeals. "The hope for speedy revolutionary actions more appeals to the heart than peaceful sermons," Weitling said during the above-mentioned discussion in London. "The endless peaceful propaganda weakens courage and zeal.... At times a revolutionary battle should flare up, even if its only result will be persecution by reaction; this exactly is the best propaganda."

Opposing direct revolutionary action to theory, Weitling appealed: "Let us not plume ourselves so much on our experience and censure the recklessness of youth. The youth with their recklessness often

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 175.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 24.

act much more reasonably than old people with their imaginary wisdom...."[1]

In his speech at a meeting of the Brussels committee Engels emphasised the need for working out a general theory, which could be the banner of all fighters for remaking the existing social relations. Marx levied scathing criticism on Weitling for his "exciting of fantastic hopes" for the realisation of communism in the near future. To address the worker "without a strictly scientific idea and a positive theory", he said, "is tantamount to a silly and foul play at preacher, where on the one side there should be an inspired prophet and on the other, only gaping asses listening to him...."[2]

Marx, Engels and their followers struggled against the "true socialists" and the Proudhonists along the same lines as they struggled against Utopianism, for the scientific foundation of the proletarian movement.

The eclectic medley of individual propositions of Hegel and Feuerbach combined with the ideas of the Utopians and the sentimental-religious moods, which was disguised under the name of "true socialism", interfered with the development of the class consciousness of the workers, misled them as regards the true aims and nature of communism. Written by Marx and Engels and adopted by the Brussels committee in 1846, the *Circular Against Kriege*, one of the propagandists of the ideas of "true socialism" in America, is keynoted by a class, partisan approach to an analysis of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. Marx and Engels denounced Kriege's attempts to reduce this movement they described as a "world historic revolutionary movement", "a movement practical to the highest degree" to trite words about "humaneness", "the human race", etc. They showed that under the name of communism Kriege preached a religious-philosophical phantasy opposed to communism. "*Faith*, more specifically, faith in the 'holy spirit of community' is the last thing required for the achievement of communism."[3]

The basically idealistic theories of the petty-bourgeois socialists, their misunderstanding of the genuine laws governing the development of society were matched by their practical activities—a search for a social panacea, a magic remedy that would immediately cure all social ills and secure paradise on earth. With Kriege this remedy was allotment of land plots to working people, to the Proudhonists (whose influence within the Parisian communes of the League of the Just was fairly strong, which was attributable to no small extent to the activities of the "true socialist" Karl Grün, who had become

[1] *Der Bund der Kommunisten*, Band I, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1970, S. 227, 228.

[2] Ibid., S. 228.

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 45.

a zealous follower of Proudhon), cashless exchange and interest-free credit.

On the theoretical plane Proudhon's views were subjected to devastating criticism in Marx's work *The Poverty of Philosophy*. Of great importance in the struggle for the proletarian party was the development by Marx in that book of the problems involved in the class struggle of the proletariat, the laws of its development, the correlation between the economic and political struggles of the working class, the role of the strike struggles, the trade unions and "other forms in which the proletarians carry out ... their organisation as a class".[1]

Marx showed in *The Poverty of Philosophy* the historical significance of the economic struggle of the working class, in the course of which it begins to form into a "class for itself", to become aware of its class antagonism to the bourgeoisie. This process inevitably develops into political struggle (and can be completed only through the latter), into a struggle for the emancipation of the oppressed class, which "implies necessarily the creation of a new society".[2]

On the practical plane Engels carried out great work among the Parisian workers—members of the League of the Just—in the period 1846-1847 to expose the petty-bourgeois character of Proudhon's ideas and disseminate scientific socialism. In the course of discussions the workers gradually came to understand the need for adopting the communist positions, because the Communists were determined, as Engels formulated their aims at the time, "1. to safeguard the interests of the proletariat as against those of the bourgeoisie; 2. to do this through the abolition of private property and its replacement by community of goods; 3. to recognise no means of carrying out these objects other than a democratic revolution by force."[3] The adoption of a resolution to this effect at a meeting of representatives of the communes of the League of the Just in Paris reflected a departure from the ideas of petty-bourgeois socialism which had already begun among the advanced workers. "As against the untenability of the previous theoretical views, and as against the practical aberrations resulting therefrom," Engels wrote about the leaders of the League of the Just, "it was realised more and more in London that Marx and I were right in our new theory."[4]

This tendency was also reflected in official documents of the League. For instance, a message from the People's Chamber of the League of the Just in February 1847 expressed the idea that mankind could achieve its liberation only with the aid of the European prole-

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 211.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 27.
[4] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 181.

tariat. The idea of the need for the ideological and organisational independence of the proletarian movement was also presented in fairly clear terms in the message. "At present we are the vanguard of the movement, and therefore, we must have our own banner to rally behind; we must not be lost in the midst of the huge army of Philistines. If we boldly march forward in serried ranks, we shall be followed by others; if we scatter between different parties, we shall never achieve anything."[1]

In that situation, Marx and Engels early in 1847 accepted the offer of London's leaders of the League of the Just to join it. As long as Marx and Engels concentrated primarily on evolving a scientific theory expressing the vital interests of the working class they abstained from joining any of the existing labour organisations, unwilling as a matter of principle to commit themselves to the platform of some socialist sect, but when it came to organising the proletarian party they deemed it impossible to carry out this work outside the existing labour organisations.

After Marx and Engels joined the League of the Just the process of its evolution to Marxism both on the theoretical and organisational planes was speeded up considerably by their indefatigable efforts, as was patently demonstrated by the Congress of the League in London in June 1847.

The Congress of the League, which was attended by Engels, resolved to rename it the Communist League. Motivating this decision the Congress underscored in a circular to the League members: "We are not distinguished by wanting justice in general—anyone can claim that for himself—but by our attack on the existing social order and on private property, by wanting community of property, by being Communists."[2]

The Congress discussed the draft programme of the League and circulated to the communes as the basis for a discussion "A Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith" compiled by Engels and worded as questions and answers, a habitual form for the workers at that time, setting forth in simple language the principles of scientific communism. A decision was taken to found a printed organ of the League and publish its first specimen copy for a start. The followers of Weitling were expelled from the League. Explaining the need for dissociation from the followers of K. Grün, the Central Authority of the Communist League emphasised that "there is only room for Communists in our League"[3].

The Congress devoted much time to drawing up a new Charter, whose draft was circulated to local communes for discussion and

[1] *Der Bund der Kommunisten*, Band I, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1970, S. 454.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 595.
[3] Ibid., p. 610.

subsequent approval at the next congress. The old Charter was revised to delete what was characteristic of conspiratorial organisations, which reflected the past stage in the development of the working-class movement. At the same time, in view of the international character of the Communist League, the Charter was cleared of certain provisions "the German character of which," as the Congress circular said, "produced a disturbing impression given the nature of our anti-nationalist League which is open to all peoples".[1]

A congress called regularly was proclaimed the supreme body of the League. The executive functions were to be performed by the Central Committee. The primary cells of the League (communes) were united in districts. Regular membership fees were instituted. The election of the leading bodies at all levels—from the communes to the Central Committee—combined with subordination of the lower bodies to the higher. At the same time, the draft Charter retained certain provisions inconsistent with the new tasks facing the working-class movement, for instance, the incompatibility of membership of the League with membership of any other organisation or the requirement for approval of Congress decisions by the communes.

Of immense importance was the Congress resolution to replace the old motto of the League of the Just—"All men are brothers!" with the slogan of proletarian internationalism—"Working men of all countries, unite!". This slogan which was first proclaimed in the draft Charter has become the clarion call of the international working-class movement.

The founding of the Communist League, the first international labour organisation, which proclaimed scientific communism its ideological banner, set off the process of fusion of Marxism with the labour movement.[2]

An immense amount of work was pending to implement the decisions taken, to strengthen the League ideologically and organisationally, and to reinforce its ties with labour and democratic organisations.

In a situation where a bourgeois-democratic revolution was imminent in Europe, primarily on the Continent, it was vitally important for the newly-born proletarian party to set up ties both with the mass of the proletariat and the democratic movements. Therefore, Marx and Engels set the communes of the League, which operated

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 595.

[2] The history of founding and the activities of the Communist League is described in the following monographs: E. P. Kandel, *Marx and Engels—Founding Fathers of the Communist League*, Moscow, 1953 (in Russian); M. I. Mikhailov, *History of the Communist League*, Moscow, 1968 (in Russian); K. Obermann, *Zur Geschichte des Bundes der Kommunisten 1849 bis 1852*, Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1955. Documents on the history of the Communist League were published in the miscellanea: *Der Bund der Kommunisten*, Bd. I, Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1970.

underground, the task of setting up legal labour organisations rallied around them and establishing ties with existing organisations.

Within the framework of efforts to accomplish this task the German Workers' Association was set up in Brussels under the direction of members of the Brussels commune of the Communist League. The Association established contacts with a number of labour organisations in Belgium. Recalling the activities of this kind Marx wrote later: "courses for basic instruction to workers" were opened wherever possible.[1] He himself read at the German Workers' Association in Brussels a cycle of lectures on economics, which was partly published later under the title *Wage Labour and Capital.*

Simultaneously, contacts were being established with democratic organisations in individual countries with a view to the eventual unity of action in the forthcoming revolution between the communist proletarian revolutionaries and the progressive democrats. Significant in this context was the amendment to the Charter of the Communist League suggested by the Brussels commune, i.e., indisputably initiated by Marx and Engels. The amendment provided for lifting the ban forbidding members of the League to join other organisations, because this ban made it difficult to influence them.[2]

The Brussels Democratic Association was set up with the direct participation of Marx and Engels. It was joined by both proletarian revolutionaries and emigrant democrats from a number of European countries. The Association set up ties with organisations outside Belgium: "The Fraternal Democrats" and the Chartists in London, democratic elements in France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. Keen attention was paid, in particular, to establishing links with the French petty-bourgeois democrats rallied around the newspaper *La Réforme.* In the negotiations with one of the leaders of this faction, Louis Blanc, Engels emphasised that agreement on practical and urgent problems should by no means rule out discussion on theoretical problems. "The union of the democrats of different nations does not exclude mutual criticism. It is impossible without such criticism."[3]

Without agreeing to any compromises on theoretical problems the founders of scientific communism pursued a clearcut line towards the unity of democratic forces, a process in which the international democratic congress of 1848 was to become a stage.

As the activities of the Communist League became more complex and variegated, the need for a party press organ to propagate the ideas of scientific communism, to plan a common strategy and

---

[1] Karl Marx, "Herr Vogt", Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 14, s. 438.
[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 612.
[3] Ibid., p. 409.

tactics in the pre-revolutionary situation became more apparent. The publication of the journal, as had been decided at the first Congress of the League, proved impossible to get started; only a trial copy of *Kommunistische Zeitschrift* had come off the press in September 1847. The contents of that issue reflected a positive change in the class consciousness of progressive workers—members of the League, the process of assimilation of the ideas of scientific communism. The journal upheld the idea of an irreconcilable class antagonism between the interests of the bourgeoisie and those of the proletariat and declared that emancipation of the proletariat "could be achieved only in a society based on the community of property".[1] Such transformation, the journal said, could be effected only by a revolution which depended for its success on the unity of the proletariat. Clearcut dividing lines were drawn to indicate dissociation both from "the true socialists"—sentimental preachers of universal love, and from the champions of "garrison socialism". "We are convinced ... that in no other society can the freedom of the individual be greater than in a society based on the community of property."[2] In one article Wilhelm Wolff, an associate of Marx and Engels, expressed the idea that the proletariat must win the basic democratic freedoms to be able to struggle for its own interests.

At the same time, one can feel the influence of the old, pre-Marxian views in the journal. We can read, for instance, that in "modern society the proletarians are all those who cannot live off their capital: the worker just as the scientist, the artist just as the petty bourgeois."[3]

The journal, however, even if it had been possible to organise its publication, could not have coped with the tasks posed by the objective course of the development of the revolutionary movement. It was necessary to have a tribune with a wider and more massive audience, from which Marx and Engels could not only propagate their views within a relatively narrow circle of forward-looking proletarians but also influence wider democratic strata, which was immensely important, particularly on the threshold of a revolution.

The democratic emigrant newspaper *Deutsche-Brüsseler-Zeitung* became such a tribune in the autumn of 1847. One of the central subjects of the articles the founders of scientific communism wrote for the newspaper was the problem of correlation between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism in the forthcoming revolution, the need for the working class to gain democratic freedoms. The workers, Marx wrote, "can and must accept the *bourgeois revolution* as a precondition for the *workers' revolution*. However,

---

[1] *Der Bund der Kommunisten*, Bd. I, Berlin, 1970, S. 504.
[2] Ibid., S. 506.
[3] Ibid., S. 504.

they cannot for a moment regard it as their *ultimate goal*."[1] The point is that the victory of a bourgeois revolution sets the stage for the unity of the working class, and "the uniting of the workers is the first requirement for their victory".[2] What is more, as Engels underscored, "the industrial proletariat of the towns has become the vanguard of all modern democracy; the urban petty bourgeoisie and still more the peasants depend on its initiative completely".[3]

The proletariat can perform its historic role in the process of radical revolutionary transformation of social relations only if it has become aware of its class objectives in the course of its struggle against capital and united under the leadership of its revolutionary vanguard—the proletarian party.

In the meantime, the struggle against the petty-bourgeois socialists within the ranks of the League itself continued. By that time a few dozen communes of the League had been set up in Germany (Hamburg, Leipzig, Mainz, Berlin, etc.), England (London), Belgium (Brussels, Liege), France (Paris, Lyons, Marseilles), Switzerland (Geneva, Bern), Sweden (Stockholm), and some other countries. After the completion of the first congress of the Communist League, the Central Committee of the League sent to the communes a circular letter, the draft of the new Charter and the "Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith" written by Engels. Simultaneously, emissaries of the League were sent to a number of countries to organise new sections and set up ties between them and the Central Committee. The institution of emissaries—both those specially commissioned by the Central Committee to definite areas and emissaries "on occasion", i.e., workers taking a private trip and performing incidental assignments of the Central Committee—was a specific form of strengthening the links between the communes and the Central Committee of the League in the conditions of territorial dispersion of its organisations, the instability of the membership of the communes, the difficulty of maintaining connections between them.

The emissaries sent to Germany and Switzerland came up against the activities of Weitling's followers, who tried to disrupt the ties between the League's local communes and the Central Committee. A stubborn struggle against the followers of Weitling and Proudhon was also being waged within the Parisian sections of the League. Not all members of the organisations immediately understood the motive for renaming the League and the necessity of ideological and organisational dissociation with the followers of Weitling and Proudhon.

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 333.
[2] Ibid., p. 332.
[3] Ibid., p. 295.

The Central Committee of the League, through its emissaries, as well as by circulating letters of instructions sought to secure the implementation of the Congress decisions. The vigorous activities of Marx in Brussels and Engels in Paris, their growing influence on the London leaders of the Central Committee of the Communist League greatly contributed to its ideological and organisational consolidation. That is why the Central Committee in a letter of October 18, 1847 to the Brussels district described London and Paris as the "pillars of the whole League" and emphasised the urgent need for Marx to attend the forthcoming congress, which was to strengthen the Communist League.

What was of special importance in the prevailing situation was that the programme documents were to reflect the triumph of the principles of scientific communism as the theoretical foundation of the working-class movement and the basis for the new organisational principles of the activity of the proletarian party. In the course of preparations for the coming second congress of the League, Engels drafted in Paris at the end of October 1847 a new version of the programme—"Principles of Communism".

The Second Congress of the Communist League, which Marx and Engels described as the first international congress of the proletariat, was held in London from the end of November to the beginning of December 1847. It was attended by representatives of the League's organisations in Germany, Switzerland, France, England, Belgium, and some other countries. Marx and Engels were also present as delegates. The Congress adopted, with important amendments, the Charter, which proclaimed in its first article the aims of the proletarian party: "the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old bourgeois society which rests on the antagonism of classes, and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property."[1] Consistent with these basic principles of scientific communism proclaimed as the theoretical foundation and programme of struggle of the proletarian party were the new organisational principles based essentially on the principles of democratic centralism and signifying the final renunciation of the survivals of sectarianism and conspiratorial practices.[2]

The supreme policy-planning body of the League was a congress. On the initiative of Marx and Engels the provision to the effect that all policy decisions of a congress are subject to approval by the communes was deleted from the original draft of the Charter. The Charter strictly abided by the principle of electivity of the

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 633.

[2] Walter Schmidt, "Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei und Statuten des Bundes der Kommunisten." In: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung*, Heft 3, Berlin, 1973, S. 403-14.

executive bodies of the League, subordination of the lower to the higher bodies and regular accountability of the higher bodies to the lower. The terms of membership required not only acceptance of the ideological programme of the League and compliance with its decisions but also active personal work consistent with its aims, revolutionary energy and fervour in propaganda.[1] The clause forbidding members to join other organisations was deleted and one of the conditions of membership of the League incorporated in the Charter was abstention from joining—now not "any" association, as stipulated in the draft Charter submitted to the first congress, but "any anti-communist ... association."[2]

In the course of prolonged discussions at the congress, Marx and Engels defended the principles of scientific communism. "All contradiction and doubt," Engels recalled years later, "were finally set at rest, the new basic principles were unanimously adopted, and Marx and I were commissioned to draw up the Manifesto."[3] This implied the future *Communist Manifesto*.

THE MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The Marxist programme of the Communist League was developed in three main stages: early in June 1847 Engels, as mentioned above, drew up the original "Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith"; at the end of October he remade it into "Principles of Communism"; in December 1847 and January 1848 Marx and Engels wrote on its basis the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. In the process of this work the founders of scientific communism further developed revolutionary theory, explained in greater detail the tasks facing the working-class movement, and embodied the theoretical achievements of Marxism in the precise wording of a political manifesto understandable to forward-looking proletarians.

The authors of the *Manifesto* not only gave an answer to the pressing problems of the development of the working-class movement at that time but also brilliantly outlined the strategic perspective of the struggle of the proletariat. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* became a "common programme accepted by millions of workers from Siberia to California" (Engels), the common programme of struggle of the international proletariat for many decades ahead exactly because it was based on a scientific analysis of the fundamen-

---

[1] *Der Bund der Kommunisten*, Bd. I, Berlin, 1970, S. 626.

[2] *Statuten des Bundes der Kommunisten.* D) Enthaltung der Teilnahme an jeder antikommunistischen politischen oder nationalen Gesellschaft... (*Der Bund der Kommunisten*, Bd. I, Berlin, 1970, S. 626.)

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 182.

tal laws of historical development, the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The *Manifesto* was the logical outcome of the preceding development of Marxist theory. The publication of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* completed the formative stage of Marxism. By that time it had taken shape as an integral world outlook, as a fundamentally new conception of cognition and transformation of the world. In the *Manifesto* this outlook was presented as the programme of a definite political party—the party of the revolutionary proletariat.

The fundamental principles of Marxism developed in the process of its formation predetermined both the theoretical content and the distinctive structure of the *Manifesto*.

Guided by the fundamental Marxist principle of the unity of theory and practice, the authors of the *Manifesto* dialectically combine an exposition of the theoretical principles of scientific communism in the first two chapters with criticism of various trends of non-proletarian socialism in Chapter III and formulate in the concluding Chapter IV the distinctive features of the tactics of the proletariat in different countries.

Chapter I, "Bourgeois and Proletarians", presents proof of the inevitability of a communist revolution. It opens with one of the main general conclusions derived from this historical conception: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."[1] This is followed by an examination of contemporary bourgeois society from this point of view. This society is more and more splitting up into two antagonistic classes directly facing each other: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Then follows an analysis of the development and struggle of these two main classes of bourgeois society, which boils down in effect to an analysis of the two principal material prerequisites for a communist revolution.

In the first half of the chapter the authors discuss the development of new productive forces, which takes place under the sway and leadership of the bourgeoisie and then outgrows the bourgeois relations and dictates their abolition. The second part contains an analysis of the process of the formation and development of the proletariat—the objective force called upon to do away with the bourgeois relations of production, which have turned into fetters for the continued development of modern productive forces. "But not only has the bourgeoisie," write Marx and Engels, "forged the weapons (i.e., the modern productive forces.—*Ed.*) that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—*the proletarians*."[2]

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 482.
[2] Ibid., p. 490.

Describing the process of the formation of the proletariat, Marx and Engels single out a number of stages. In the initial stage the process essentially consists in the conversion of the mass of the population into labourers. The sway of capital levels off the conditions of life, in particular, the conditions of labour of this mass, contributes to the formation of the objective community of its interests. In the social sense this is already a class, because it is opposed to capital as a social force. In the political and ideological respects, however, it has not yet taken shape, because it has not yet become aware of itself as an independent force, of its place in the historical process. In the second stage the proletariat (or its vanguard at any rate) becomes aware of its place in the system of social relations, of its historic mission, and takes part on a broad scale in an organised struggle to carry it out.

A truly scientific analysis of the development of the proletariat, as it follows from the *Manifesto*, requires a detailed examination of its different aspects—numerical growth, organisational unity, qualitative changes.[1] Among the latter the *Manifesto* lays emphasis on intellectual development. What is more, some major features of the mechanism of such development are already outlined here. It is pointed out that the bourgeoisie, which is involved in a constant battle with the aristocracy, as well as with individual factions of the bourgeoisie itself, is compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus to drag it into the political arena. "The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie."[2]

The intellectual development of the proletariat is facilitated to no small degree by changes in the social structure of society conditioned by the development of capitalism. The erosion of the numerous intermediate social groups, on the one hand, and the steady numerical growth of the working class, on the other, result in a situation where both individual members and whole strata of the propertied class sink into the proletariat. They bring with themselves elements of education, which are the more essential the deeper the process.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. In this way, a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, "in particular, a portion

---

[1] See *The Communist Manifesto and the Modern Times*, Moscow, 1974, p. 174, etc. (in Russian).

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 493.

of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole."[1]

The development of the proletariat as a whole is conditioned not only by change in the external circumstances of existence but also by its active involvement in the formation and alteration of these circumstances. This active involvement is realised primarily in the form of the class struggle. The *Manifesto* shows the mutations of this struggle—both in scope and in content, how it passes through various phases—from the different levels of economic to political struggle, how and why it must ultimately lead to the conquest of political power by the proletariat by revolutionary means, to a cardinal transformation of the whole society.

Explaining the economic motive for the world historic mission of the proletariat, Marx and Engels declare: "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product."[2]

At the same time, analysing the process of the formation and development of the proletariat as the sole consistently revolutionary force, as the grave-digger of capitalism and the future builder of a communist society, the founders of Marxism showed the complex character of this process, the existence of dialectical contradictions in the very position of the working class. On the one hand, the proletariat has no private property, is exploited and oppressed by capital, and is opposed to it as a hostile force. On the other hand, it was brought into being by the private-owner capitalist mode of production and connected with it by all conditions of its life. Any changes in the functioning of capital and the organisation of capitalist production affect the vital interests of the proletariat. What is more, as Marx indicates, the working class becomes involved in capitalist production through its natural development.

The objective position of the proletariat as a class of people who have no private property, sell their labour power and are exploited gives rise to the leading, revolutionary tendency of the development of this class, a tendency of resolute, uncompromising struggle against capitalism. The objective involvement in capitalist production and the recognition of the conditions of this mode of production give rise to a tendency towards varying forms of opportunism and social compromise, which at definite stages and under definite circumstances may influence a certain part of the working class.

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 494.
[2] Ibid.

The revolutionary tendency ultimately wins but only in a struggle against opportunism.

Another contradiction is organically linked and intertwined with the above-mentioned one. On the one hand, the proletarians are organised, united, enlightened and hardened by the entire process of capitalist production, the organisation of work at large enterprises, by the struggle between classes. In this process the proletariat becomes aware of itself as a powerful revolutionary force, whose struggle is dependent for success on its class solidarity. The growth and consolidation of the proletariat is a historical law. On the other hand, as is stated in the *Manifesto*, the "organisation of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves."[1] Such competition is a weapon of the bourgeoisie in its struggle against the proletariat. It creates the nutrient medium for the policy of disuniting the working class according to various occupational groups, for demagogic social manoeuvres on the part of the bourgeoisie.

The objective processes, primarily the development of productive forces, help overcome the tendency towards disunity, but this requires conscious, well-organised and purposive actions.[2] Chapter I ends with the conclusion that the victory of the proletariat is inevitable.

Chapter II is entitled "Proletarians and Communists". This subject is directly discussed at the beginning of the chapter. On the whole, however, it deals with the future process of communist transformation of society. Thus, Chapter I discusses development prior to the revolution and Chapter II, after its accomplishment.

The authors reveal the dialectics of the relationship between the proletarian party and the proletarian class. They show that the Communists "have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole". At the same time, the Communists are distinguished by the fact that they always represent the interests of the emancipation movement of the proletariat as a whole. Marx and Engels emphasise the vanguard role of the Communist Party both in politics and in theory.

Extending the main conclusion of Chapter I they write at the beginning of Chapter II: "The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat."[3] Going on to develop

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 493.
[2] See *The Communist Manifesto and the Modern Times*, pp. 45-47 (in Russian).
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 498.

the idea of communism as a real movement, the authors formulate the important thesis that communism is the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement.

The description of the role of the vanguard revolutionary party in the *Manifesto* is to this day a favourite theme of theorising by bourgeois scholars hostile to Marxism. Their main allegation is that in the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels deny the need for the Communists to unite in a separate party and that no idea of their vanguard role is to be found there. In the forties of the 19th century, in a situation where the working-class movement was yet undeveloped, Marx and Engels regarded as a proletarian party any working-class association waging political struggle. In the meantime, however, the Communist Party was already being formed as a party which was to play the role of vanguard called upon to guide all the forms of the class struggle of the proletariat. For this reason, the founders of Marxism, in substantiating the vanguard role of the Communist Party, invariably emphasised the indissoluble unity of all the contingents of the working-class movement.

The true motive for all attempts to revise the conception of the vanguard role of the revolutionary party expressed by the authors of the *Manifesto* is an obvious ideological goal. This goal is to oppose Marx and Engels to Lenin in this sphere as well, and thereby to emasculate the revolutionary content of the works of the founders of Marxism. Anti-communists of every stripe unanimously gang up in upholding these falsified constructs: openly bourgeois ideologists, right-wing Socialists, representatives of various leftist circles.

The main part of Chapter II is devoted to disproving the allegations that the Communists intend to abolish (1) property, (2) the family, (3) countries and nationality, (4) religion and morals. In the context of the question of property three other questions are raised: the individual, the incentives to work and education; in the context of the question of the family, the question of upbringing. The question of religion and morals is widened to that of social consciousness in general.

At first glance, the above-mentioned four points of anti-criticism amount only to a refutation of the most widespread accusations made against Communists. On closer scrutiny, however, one finds that the selection of precisely these questions and in precisely this succession is far from accidental and is conditioned by definite inner logic. The first three questions correspond to three types of social relations: relations of production (property), family relations, national relations; they are viewed as relations on three different levels or scales: on the scale of each given society, family, and between countries. The fourth point logically follows them, since the forms of social consciousness are derivatives of social being.

Such a succession (property—family—nation—consciousness) agrees with the general materialistic conception of the authors of the *Manifesto*, according to which the structure of society consists of a number of elements: productive forces—production and other social relations—the political superstructure—the forms of social consciousness. Noteworthy in this connection is the fact that it is precisely in the *Manifesto* that a clear distinction was drawn for the first time between "relations of production" and "the total of social relations", whereas in other works of the same period relations of production and social relations were often identified, as it were, with one another.[1]

Disproving the accusations by their opponents, the authors of the *Manifesto* describe in one way or another the corresponding aspects of the future, communist society. Then, they revert, so to say, to the point the reader was led to at the end of Chapter I, and now, in conclusion of Chapter II, examine these three questions: the proletarian revolution, transitional measures, the general characteristics of communist society. They very clearly formulate the two general tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat: (1) to wrest, by degrees, all instruments of production from the bourgeoisie and centralise them in the hands of the proletarian state—"in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class";[2] in other words, to convert private property in the means of production into public property (state property in the given period) and (2) "to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible", i.e., to boost production within the shortest time possible.

The programme of specific transitional measures, although it is a rewording of a similar programme outlined by Engels in *Principles of Communism*, contains some new provisions and is distinguished by greater logical consistency. On the whole, one can find here a correspondence between the first general task of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the first six points of this programme, between the second general task and the remaining four points. Both parts are reduced in the final analysis to the destructive and constructive tasks in remaking society.

The condensed description of communist society at the end of Chapter II is very brief (literally two paragraphs). It is reduced to three principles: "class distinctions have disappeared", "the public power will lose its political character", "the free development of

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 212.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 504. Regarding this definition, Lenin wrote: "Here we have a formulation of one of the most remarkable and most important ideas of Marxism on the subject of the state, namely, the idea of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 407.)

each" will be guaranteed. In effect, however, the *Manifesto* describes, to a varying extent, directly or indirectly, all the main aspects of the future society: its productive forces (Chapter I) and its social relations and consciousness (the polemic section of Chapter II), its classless structure, the withering away of the political superstructure, the position of the individual in society (the end of Chapter II).

The theoretical part of the *Manifesto* is ended with a classical definition of the essence of the future, communist society: "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."[1] This summarising formula in the *Manifesto* proclaims the ultimate goal of communist transformation of society.

In Chapter III the section on critical-Utopian socialism and communism is of exceptional importance. Here a difference of principle is shown between Utopianism of any kind and truly scientific communism.

It was already in *The Poverty of Philosophy*[2] that Marx had exposed the historical roots of Utopianism. The *Manifesto* deepens the explanation given there. Utopian schemes, its authors indicate, spring into existence in a period when the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is as yet undeveloped. The Utopians "do not yet offer the material conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat", and therefore they attempt to conjure them up, to invent them. The place of the historical conditions of the emancipation, of the class struggle of the proletariat is to go "to an organisation of society specially contrived by these inventors". Hence, they reject all revolutionary action. "Such fantastic pictures of future society" are "painted at a time when the proletariat is still in a very undeveloped state...."[3]

The specific distinctions of scientific communism, as Marx and Engels see them, are as follows: the authentic expression of the interests of the proletariat attributable to a correct assessment of its world historic mission; the materialistic interpretation of history, which is the theoretical foundation of scientific communism; recognition of the objective necessity of a communist revolution as the outcome of the class struggle of the proletariat; the conception of communist society as the logical result of objective historical development.

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 506; cf. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 211, 341, 353, 389; *Werke*, Bd. 18, S. 527; Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 349; Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, part II, p. 118; *Werke*, Bd. 39, S. 194.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 177-78.

[3] Ibid., pp. 514-16.; cf. Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1975, pp. 305-006.

It is obvious that on the theoretical plane all these distinctions are conditioned by the materialistic interpretation of history and on the social plane, by the class nature of Marxism.

Relying on this fact, Marx and Engels established an important law of change in the objective role of Utopian views in the course of the struggle of the proletariat. Reflecting the primary stage in the formation of its consciousness, its past, they become a heavy burden for the working class, which has entered the wide arena of conscious historical activity. "The significance of Critical-Utopian Socialism and Communism bears an inverse relation to historical development. In proportion as the modern class struggle develops and takes definite shape, this fantastic standing apart from the contest, these fantastic attacks on it, lose all practical value and all theoretical justification. Therefore, although the originators of these systems were, in many respects, revolutionary, their disciples have, in every case, formed mere reactionary sects.... By degrees they sink into the category of the reactionary conservative Socialists depicted above, differing from these only by more systematic pedantry, and by their fanatical and superstitious belief in the miraculous effects of their social science."[1]

In the concluding Chapter IV of the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels outline the general principles of the tactics of the revolutionary proletarian party. These tactics are based on a dialectical combination of the general principles in conformity with the concrete historical conditions, an understanding of the law-governed character of the revolutionary process passing through a few stages prior to the victory of the proletarian revolution.

Therefore, as is stated in the *Manifesto*, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing order and seek to unite all democratic forces. Playing an active part in this movement, the Communists at the same time preserve their class independence and, while fighting for its future, advance the problem of property to the foreground.

For the first time in the history of socialist thought Marx and Engels raised in the *Manifesto* the following problem of crucial importance for the cause of social revolution: the correlation between the national and the international in the working-class movement, and scientifically substantiated the approach of the working class to its solution. The urgency of this problem was motivated by objective factors—the processes of internationalisation of the socio-economic life of nations, on the one hand, and the rise of the national movements, on the other, and by factors of a subjective character—the existence of nationalistic trends within the working-class move-

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 516-517.

ment, the struggle of the internationalists to overcome them, the need to work out a revolutionary strategy that would correctly combine the national and international tasks of the proletariat.

The founders of scientific communism regarded the problem of the correlation between the national and the international as the relationship of the specific, pertaining to this or that individual nation, and the universal, social, characteristic of social development in all countries. In their investigation of this problem they made an analysis of the objective social and political processes determining the development of capitalism and linked its solution to society's historical movement towards socialism. Marx and Engels regarded the national and the social as a dialectical unity expressing the concrete historical unity of form and content in the development of the working-class movement. Whereas the class-social factor determines the essence, the content of this process, the national factor lends it form, individualises it in accordance with the conditions of every given country. "Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."[1]

This task accomplished within a national framework is essentially social, has a universal, international character determined by the common socio-economic position and conditions of emancipation of the working class. Under capitalism the primary and main social function of the proletariat is to be the object of exploitation. The conditions of its existence debar it from possession of the nation's material wealth appropriated by the bourgeoisie and from leadership of national life usurped by the dominant class. In this, social, sense, "the workingmen have no country". This is precisely the reason why, as the authors of the *Manifesto* say in formulating their second thesis, the proletariat must "rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *the* nation".[2]

Over many decades a polemic on the problem of combination of these two theses has been going on between the Marxists and opportunists of all trends. The "Left" opportunists elevate to the absolute the first of them—"the workingmen have no country", turning it into an absurd proclamation of national nihilism. The Right opportunists misinterpret the second thesis (the proletariat "... must constitute itself *the* nation") to substantiate the doctrine of "national socialism", which is incompatible with the principles of proletarian internationalism.

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 495.
[2] Ibid., pp. 502-503.

Lenin, who repeatedly analysed *Communist Manifesto*, emphasised that it was "exceptionally incorrect"[1] to discuss the first thesis as irrelevant to the second. The true meaning of these theses consists in that the proletariat, which rejects the idea of a bourgeois nationalist homeland, is called upon to lead the way in the anticapitalist struggle of the working masses, to become the leading class of the nation so as to guide it towards socialism. Thus, in the revolutionary struggle of the workers the national is realised as the international, expressing in a form corresponding to the concrete conditions of each country the universal interests of the international proletariat irrespective of nationality.

The *Manifesto* ends with a truly prophetic declaration crowning the strictly scientific theory of communism: "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!"[2] This great appeal has become the clarion call of the entire international revolutionary working-class movement, a symbol of its indissoluble unity, the earnest of its coming victories.

Summing up the significance of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Lenin, the great continuer of the cause of Marx and Engels, wrote: "With the clarity and brilliance of genius, this work outlines a new world-conception, consistent materialism, which also embraces the realm of social life; dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development; the theory of the class struggle and of the world-historic revolutionary role of the proletariat—the creator of a new, communist society."[3] Therefore, Lenin had ample reason to say: "This little booklet is worth whole volumes: to this day its spirit inspires and guides the entire organised and fighting proletariat of the civilised world."[4]

Since the time of writing the *Communist Manifesto* and its adoption as the programme of the first international communist organisation of the revolutionary proletariat, the theory of scientific communism presented in it has been part and parcel of the objective historic process of mankind's development.

---

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, p. 251.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 519.
[3] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 48.
[4] Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 24.

Chapter 7

THE WORKING CLASS IN THE EUROPEAN REVOLUTIONS OF 1848-1849

The European revolutions of 1848-1849 were an important period in the history of the class battles of the proletariat.[1] They swept many countries: France, the German states and Austria, the Czech lands of the Empire, Hungary, Transylvania and the Kingdom of Lombardy and Venice, other Italian states, and Poland. For their socio-economic and political content these were bourgeois-democratic revolutions. In the broad sense, their character, aims and tasks were on the whole identical everywhere. Nevertheless, the participants in the struggle in each country interpreted these tasks in their own way. As it often happened, in 1848 the masses eventually carrying out a revolution gave no thought to the long-term socio-economic results of their own actions and pursued their current objectives which widely varied from country to country.

In France the insurgent proletarians came out against the monarchy so as to effect a social transformation beneficial to the wage labourers. The German workers who took part in the revolution sought to abolish the rule of the landed aristocracy, establish a constitutional system in the hope that this would improve their economic position and put an end to the tyranny and "injustice". In the German and Italian states, and in the subjugated countries an important role in the workers' struggles was played by the national aspirations.

The bourgeoisie, which was discontented with the prevailing order but scared like hell of a popular revolution went out of its way to take the lead in the mass movement so as to keep it under its control. It failed to achieve this aim on an all-European scale: in France the proletariat, which was increasingly active as an independent political force, in June 1848 rose to a decisive battle against

[1] For more detail on the history of the European revolutions of 1848-1849 see: *The Revolutions of 1848-1849*. Ed. by F. V. Potemkin and A. I. Molok, Vol. 1-2, Moscow, 1952 (in Russian).

the bourgeoisie. In other countries of the Continent, however, it realised its intention with varying success. The scene on which a social war could have broken out between the proletarians and the bourgeois was as yet littered with "feudal ruins"; the proletariat was still too weak and lacked revolutionary experience; it had not yet gone through a school of political distrust of the bourgeoisie. The workers, it is true, were in the front ranks of the revolutionary fighters—members of various social strata (the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the students, and initially burgher elements), but rarely acted independently as a political force and even more seldom put forward socialist slogans.

Everywhere the popular masses in the countries which in 1848-1849 were in the flames of a revolution, and primarily the proletarians, resorted to force in the name of justice. This is true of the French workers, who were Republicans in their vast majority; the German workers who still harboured their monarchistic illusions and were coming out in favour of a "democratic monarchy"; the Italians, who were waging a struggle to put an end to the country's political fragmentation and its humiliating dependence on the Austrian monarchy; the Hungarians who had revolted against the Habsburg tyranny; the Slav peoples which were oppressed by reactionary powers.

Besides France there was only one European country, where the proletariat and the bourgeoisie confronted each other as the main antagonists; that was England. In spite of the fact that it remained a monarchy, and the English landed aristocracy continued to wield considerable influence, many of the problems facing the bourgeois-democratic revolutions on the Continent had already been resolved in England; the country's economy had long and rapidly been developing along the capitalist path, without encountering anything like substantial survivals of feudalism; it was exactly in the thirties and forties that the Industrial Revolution was being brought to completion in England. Naturally, under such circumstances a bourgeois-democratic revolution was not on the order of the day. When a country is confronted by an objective and critical need to do away at once with the accumulated burden of old social orders a tremendous exertion of the nation's forces and an explosion of popular indignation take place, as was demonstrated, for instance, by the example of continental Europe. In England, where the situation was different, this did not happen. The direct class confrontation of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie had reached its revolutionary climax six years earlier here, and now, towards 1848, had lost its sharp edge. As a result England found itself outside the zone of political cataclysms shaking Europe; no revolution took place in that country; and the Chartist workers—still a powerful political force—could not become actively involved in the European revolution.

As for continental Europe, in 1848 the "critical points" of a few social and political trends coincided in time here. These trends were a drastic deterioration of the economic position of the masses caused by the economic crisis of 1847; the growing hatred of broad strata of the French people for the July monarchy; the striving of the bourgeoisie of the German states to break loose from feudal bondage; the aspiration of the oppressed peoples of the Austrian Empire towards national independence. Their most determined elements took advantage of the fact that the edifice of the Habsburg monarchy had begun to totter as a result of the working people's revolt in Vienna, where the political, military and administrative power of the Empire was concentrated.

The first quakes had been shaking the political ground of Europe since 1846 (the uprising in Cracow in 1846, the revolution in the Kingdom of Two Sicilies in January 1848). The French revolution, however, produced a decisive political impact on developments. Deeply implanted in the consciousness of the peoples was the conviction based on experience of over half a century that a revolution in France might lead to enormous political changes in other states of Europe; therefore, having learned of the uprising in Paris, the masses sought to speed up matters in their homelands.

All this accounts for the unique historical phenomenon—the "spring of nations" of 1848, the tide of revolutions that swept the whole Europe.

THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE PROLETARIAT AND THE BOURGEOISIE IN FRANCE

THE WORKERS ON THE ROAD TO REBELLION AFTER THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

The Belgian newspaper *Deutche-Brüsseler-Zeitung* on January 16, 1848 and the Parisian *Le Réforme* on January 19, 1848 published an unsigned item devoted to the situation in France. It read: "What does the Ministry do?—Nothing. What does the parliamentary, legal opposition do?—Nothing. What can France expect from the present Chambers?—Nothing. What does M. Guizot want?—To remain Minister. What do Messrs Thiers, Molé and Company want?—To become ministers again. What does France gain from this *ôte-toi de là, afin que je m'y mette* (get out of here so I can take your place.—*Ed.*)?—Nothing.

"Ministry and opposition are thus condemned to do nothing. Who alone will accomplish the coming French revolution?—The proletariat. What will the bourgeoisie do for this?—Nothing."[1]

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 468.

This item was written by Marx. He was confident that a revolution in France would break out in the nearest future and that changes would not be limited to a government reshuffle. The revolution, Marx presumed, would be accomplished by the proletariat. This did not mean at all, in his opinion, that its immediate result would be the establishment of working-class government; the question was different: a massive action of the workers would overthrow the July monarchy. After a month history fully confirmed Marx's prediction.

The July monarchy was toppled by the Parisian workers' uprising on February 23, 24 and 25.[1] The workers won the republic, forced the Provisional Government to agree to its proclamation and, moreover, themselves (in the literal sense) proclaimed it on the squares and streets of the capital. When insurgents on February 24 burst into the Chamber in the midst of a debate on the possibility of preserving the monarchy in the form of a regency, the Cabetist worker Guibert pointed his gun at a group of deputies, stopped the debate and announced: "No more deputies, we are the masters."[2] This incident evidenced the determination of the lower classes to do away with the monarchy. The bourgeois had not expected or wanted such an outcome. Even those of them who inclined towards a republic in place of the monarchy were not going to hurry this matter.

The conduct of the moderate bourgeois republicans during the February events was vividly expressed in the following phrase: "We wanted to climb from step to step, but we were forced to leap over a whole flight of stairs."[3] And it was precisely republicans of this kind that made up the majority in the Provisional Government formed while the fighting on the barricades was still going on.

Already in the early days of the revolution the most forward-looking insurgents began to advance specifically proletarian, as well as democratic-republican demands. On February 23, at the Saint-Dénis checkpoint posters were put up presenting "proposals to the National Assembly for improving the life of the workers." The anonymous authors suggested the following transitional measures: "the right to work" (specifically indicating that the state must create jobs at least for those who are denied them by the capitalists); the maintenance of invalids by the state; the formation of labour armies; free and compulsory universal education; the organisation of institutions that would make the people "their own bankers"; the estab-

[1] For greater detail see: N. E. Zastenker, "The Revolution of 1848. The Second Republic", in: *A History of France*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 265 *et seq.*

[2] R. Gossez, *Les ouvriers de Paris*, Livre premier, *L'Organisation 1848-1851*, Imprimerie centrale de l'ouest, La Roche-sur-Yon, 1967, p. 26.

[3] Georges Renard, *La République de 1848 (1848-1852). Histoire Socialiste (1789-1900) sous la direction de Jean Jaurès*, Tome IX, Paris, Publications Jules Rouff et Cie, s.d., p. 2.

lishment of a uniform jury system; guaranteed freedom of conscience and speech; the institution of progressive tax; universal suffrage. Other reforms, as was proclaimed in the poster, would be "effected by force of development itself". The poster ended with the appeal: "Let us keep our arms!"[1]

It is significant that the demand for universal suffrage was the last one on the list. It was also at the end of other lists of demands circulated by the workers in Paris. Already in February the workers knew that they had won universal suffrage but most of them considered it inadequate and were determined to carry on their struggle; what is more, many of them realised that the middle classes in the provinces were looking on revolutionary Paris with apprehension and, relying on the Church, were inciting the peasants against the workers.

The author of a leaflet written, as it said, on the barricades in the morning of February 24, reminded the workers of the past revolutions and said: "You get nothing in return for your blood spilled in all these glorious battles and for your wives and children killed before your eyes. Learn your lesson at last.... March on Tuileries, capture it and put the King and his family under lock and key!"[2]

At the beginning of the February Revolution the working-class movement in Paris presented the following picture in general outline: gripped in the vice of anti-labour legislation, the trade corporations in which the economic and social demands were drawn up; the politically active workers who were allied with the "red" Republicans but increasingly aware of their specific proletarian interests; a relatively thin but active stratum of political leaders, who operated in secret societies, among them Utopian Communists linked with the most forward-looking proletarians;[3] supporters of petty-bourgeois Utopian systems. The February events set these groups and organisations in motion, widened their composition and influence within the masses, united them in a general movement: the working class for the first time displayed and saw its gigantic potentialities.[4]

---

[1] "Programme du peuple français".—From a collection of unpublished materials of the Revolution of 1848 in the repository of the library of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism under the Central Committee of the CPSU, Moscow (hereafter: from the repository of the IML, Moscow).

[2] "Proclamation. Faite sur les barricades par Villaumé, le 24 février matin". From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[3] As testified by a contemporary—the revolutionary Socialist Sobrier, in France in 1848 there were a few thousand Communists of different trends (*Le Représentant du peuple*, 19.IV.1848).

[4] What was the composition of the working population of Paris in 1848? Small industries continued to prevail in the capital. In its 32,000 workshops (of the 64,000 registered enterprises) worked only one (the owner himself) or two persons (the owner and a hired labourer). A large group consisted of workmen of

One of the first symptoms of differentiation of the proletarian aspirations from bourgeois republicanism was the dispute over the state symbols.[1] All the factions of the bourgeoisie insisted that the tricolour be proclaimed the national flag of the republic. The working people of Paris insisted on a red flag which after June 1832 they regarded as the banner of the proletariat. The tricolour had become the country's national flag as far back as the reign of Louis XVI and had been disgraced by Louis-Philippe, one leaflet said.[2] The appeal of its authors for recognition of the red banner as the national flag of the republic was circulated for 36 hours in the district around the Town Hall. The leader of the group of the most active revolutionary proletarians, Auguste Blanqui, resolutely expressed his support for the red banner.[3]

Later, the poet Alphonse de Lamartine, a prominent figure in the bourgeois Provisional Government, whose flowery eloquence concealed a well-developed class instinct, described this conflict as an open struggle of the proletarians against the bourgeoisie.

The first militant action of the working class after the victory of the republic was a demonstration on February 25 in front of the Paris Town Hall, where the Provisional Government was sitting in conference. Having burst into the building with a gun in his hands, the railwayman Marche, a delegate from the workers, pointed at the window behind which a crowd was roaring and demanded that the Ministers decree "a right to work". The petition submitted to the government contained a provision for a guaranteed minimum pay to the worker and his family in the event of disease and disability. Advancing the formula of "a right to work" the workers had in mind not only government measures against unemployment; this right was interpreted also as a right to a fair share in the fruits of their labour. In other words, this demand was "a French variant" of the idea which the masses of English workers had expressed in 1842 in the slogan "A fair wage for a fair working day!" At the same time, the demand for "a right to work" was akin to the slogan of the Lyons

---

the so-called Parisian industry (jewellers, watch-makers, bronze-smiths, cabinet-makers, upholsterers, workers employed in making luxury articles, etc.). Another large group were tailors and shoe-makers—cottage workers of scattered manufactory. A numerous stratum was made up of building workers, largely seasonal workers, who lived in Paris only for a few months in a year. Finally, there were workmen employed in factory production (spinners, dyers, clothes factory workers, engineering workers, railwaymen, mechanics), who played an important and at times the vanguard role in the revolutionary struggle of 1848.

[1] See N. E. Zastenker, *The Revolution of 1848 in France*, Moscow, 1948, pp. 47-48 (in Russian).

[2] "Au gouvernement provisoire. Les Combattants Republicains". From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[3] *The Revolution of 1848 in France (February-June). Reminiscences of Veterans and Contemporaries*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1934, p. 571 (in Russian).

workers: "To live working or to die fighting!" The proletarians interpreted the meaning of both of them as follows: the worker should be guaranteed not only a job. This is not enough. This job should guarantee him a decent life.

Compiled in the editorial office of the Fourierist newspaper *La Démocratie Pacifique*, this petition submitted by *armed workers* was naturally no longer just an appeal: behind the back of Marche a formidable crowd of proletarians was waiting for an answer. On that day the government was compelled to adopt a decree which proclaimed the right of citizens to work. At the demand of the Central Republican Society set up by Blanqui in the early days of the revolution the government expunged from the Penal Code the article forbidding the workers to form coalitions.

On February 28 the same newspaper came out for the institution of "a Ministry for Working People, a Ministry for Progress"; this demand also expressed the workers' aspirations. A petition was drawn up, which was signed among others by Paul Deflotte, Théodore Dézamy and a few other members of the Central Republican Society. The petition read in part: "The republic proclaimed is but a better form of government. The people are demanding economic reforms; they are demanding a real improvement in the moral and material conditions of life for all workers. In view of this, the undersigned demand that the Provisional Government immediately set up a Ministry for Progress. This Ministry must prepare the promised organisation of work and realise all legitimate aspirations of the people."[1] The followers of Cabet also expressed their support for the petition. Thus, the Blanquists, the Cabetists and the Fourierists demanded that the government fulfil the vaguely worded promise it had made in the decree on the right to work of February 25. The petition did not specify this demand; it reflected the vagueness and uncertainty of the workers' aspirations. They sought to wrest from the bourgeois government what was still unclear even to themselves but would, so they believed, lead to the abolition of the exploitation of man by man.

The content and extent of the concessions made by the government were determined not by the wording of declarations but by the mass struggle. This was also true of the petition of February 28. Columns of workers representing the trade corporations marched on the Town Hall to sumbit it to the government. They also demanded a shorter working day and higher wages. This was another instance of pressure from the working masses on the Provisional Government. Under this pressure on February 29 it set up a government commission for the affairs of the workers. It was presided over by Louis Blanc, one

[1] Quoted from R. Gossez, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

of the two Socialists (the other was the worker Albert) in the Provisional Government and the author of the pamphlet "The Organisation of Labour" (1840).

Louis Blanc was the first Socialist in history to have a great influence on the masses—and in a period of a revolutionary upsurge for that matter. He failed to stand this test, however, graphically demonstrating thereby that a representative of petty-bourgeois Utopian socialism was unable to be a true political leader of a people's revolution. The reformist essence of Louis Blanc's socialism, his conviction that a new society could be created without overthrowing the old—all this found expression in his political activities as well. They showed that the Utopian dreams of a petty-bourgeois socialist about radical changes in the social system could only transform (and actually transformed) into political reformism. Louis Blanc's inability to find proof of the inevitability of the formation of a new social system in the developmental laws of the old was manifest, above all, in his attitude to the proletarian movement. To "pacify" and hold it within legal limits and thus to make it impotent exactly at a time when the enemy was gaining in strength—such was objectively the main trend in his political activity. His chief motive for assuming the role of conciliator was his profound conviction that the antagonisms between the workers and the bourgeoisie were the result of a misunderstanding and could be resolved in principle by their joint, co-ordinated actions.

When the bourgeois leaders of the Provisional Government kept on talking of liberty, equality and fraternity, the magnanimity of the February revolution, the unity of the people, they were just serving their class: under the smokescreen of phraseology they were preparing to disarm and defeat the proletariat. Louis Blanc, however, imagined himself a representative of the working people, and even many of the workers thought as much. And now this man added his voice to the bourgeois psalms of "universal brotherhood": "Where were our guns, our soldiers, our gendarmes and our judges in red gowns?" he wrote with pride. "Let anyone name at least one person we arrested during these two months, one house we broke into, a newspaper we closed, an insult we revenged, a voice slandering us that we silenced, a liberty we suppressed, violence we used or permitted...."[1]

For all that, in the early months of the revolution Louis Blanc remained the most popular figure among the workers. His vague socialism accorded with their aspirations, his political reformism was a concentrated expression of the reformist illusions characteristic of the French proletariat at that time. As soon as the experience of

[1] Louis Blanc, *Pages d'histoire de la Révolution de Février 1848*, Bruxelles, 1850, p. 87.

struggle in revolutionary times showed the workers the full extent of the danger posed by reformism this petty-bourgeois Socialist went by the board from the scene of political life.

Louis Blanc seized on the idea of setting up a government commission for the affairs of the workers, hoping that this institution would become the centre of propaganda and organisation of the Parisian workers. The bourgeois ministers of the Provisional Government had no alternative to this measure: indeed, every hour workers came by the thousands to the Town Hall where the government was in session; they sought a confirmation of their hope that the February revolution would become *their own*, a revolution for the working people. If the government had followed a harder line, it would have simply fallen. At the same time, by permitting the Parisian workers to set up "an organising centre" the bourgeois Republicans relieved the direct pressure of the workers on the government, leaving them to the care of Louis Blanc and confining him and the commission to the Luxembourg Palace (the former seat of the Chamber of Peers).

As further developments showed, the bourgeois ministers Louis-Antoine Garnier-Pagès and Armand Marrast, who were the first to agree to this compromise, proved correct in their calculations. In those days, however, the Parisian workers interpreted the decree of February 29 as their victory. Sixty thousand members of trade corporations demonstrated in front of the Town Hall. Speaking before the crowds, Louis Blanc declared that the commission would hold its first session in the Luxembourg Palace on March 1.

On February 27, even before the Luxembourg commission was set up, the Provisional Government published a decree on the organisation of national workshops. This institution differed in principle from the "social workshops" advertised by Louis Blanc. According to his idea, they were to offer workers jobs in accordance with their specialities; in these workshops, he presumed, a state-financed labour association would spring up. The national workshops, however, were an enterprise owned by the bourgeois state, while their employees remained hired labourers performing monotonous and sometimes senseless work.

The decree on national workshops was, in effect, a French modification of English New Poor Law. These were in fact open-air workhouses. By organising them the government provided paid jobs for a mass of Parisian unemployed and thereby lessened the social tensions in the capital. It seemed to meet halfway the demands of the workers insisting on government interference in the labour problem but showed at the same time that such interference could be nothing but an organised dole. In addition, the government expected to use the workers of the national workshops in its own political interests, presuming that the Parisian proletarians would sell their class birth-

rights for one or two francs a day[1] (this hope of the bourgeois ministers proved futile: what could be easily done in relation to the lumpen-proletarians and the unstable part of the young workers suffered a fiasco among the mass of the Parisian proletarians). Finally, the government hoped to intimidate the man in the street, shopkeepers and petty bourgeois with the spectre of socialism which, in the shape of national workshops, appeared before them as an encroachment on their right to "voluntary charity", and as an "organised strike" (many strikers saw in national workshops a refuge where they could receive a material support during a strike).

The establishment of the nationl workshops gave the Provisional Government broad opportunities for social and political manoeuvres, which it did not fail to take advantage of; the Constituent Assembly and the Executive Commission followed suit.[2]

Both the establishment of the national workshops and the constitution of the Luxembourg commission were the government's concession to the demands of the proletarians expressed in the slogan of labour organisation. In the period when the revolution of 1848 was on the upgrade this slogan in principle had the same meaning to the French workers as the slogan of the Charter to the English proletarians. The social content of these slogans was pictured by their authors very broadly, vaguely and uncertainly.

In England, the implementation of the Charter would have objectively meant a political victory for the working class and social reforms in its interests. Therefore, in 1842, when the revolutionary Chartist Movement reached its climax, the government of Robert Peel refused to make any concessions to the Chartists. In France in 1848 the demand for a social transformation upheld by the workers and reflecting their still unconscious intention to make inroads into the

[1] When the Director of the national workshops Émile Thomas in March 1848 expressed to the Minister of Public Works Marie his apprehensions about the rapid growth of the number of workers employed in these workshops, the latter told him: "Never mind the numbers... They will never be too large; but try to find what will make the workers form a sincere attachment to you." The Minister went on to explain that "perhaps the day is not far off when they would have to be thrown into the street".

[2] The national workshops as a charitable institution were nothing new in France. Decreeing them in February 1848, however, had a new social meaning. By its consent to this measure the bourgeoisie sought to canalise the workers' aspirations so that it could easily control them as it thought best. For their part, the workers agreeing to the establishment of national workshops were motivated not only by a desire to receive unemployment aid but also by their intention to reorganise them into a new social institution at a later date. Thus, when the bourgeois, pointing to the national workshops, declared that they were nothing but a "product of socialism", they were correct in one sense: the workers *wanted* to see them as an institution of this kind, to convert them into such an institution.

relations of property, even though posing a grave danger to the bourgeoisie, was not, in contrast to England, in itself a direct claim to political power. What is more, a verbal concession in this field might help the republican bourgeoisie—whose interests the Provisional Government actually represented—to establish themselves at the helm.

The question of fulfilling the social promises was to be resolved in struggle. Having set up the national workshops and the commission for the affairs of the workers, the Provisional Government retained its control over civil and military administration, the police force, finances, and foreign policy. The armed people, however, were still in control of the streets. "Anybody who lived in Paris in those days will never forget the long processions of workers carrying sinister banners and seemingly in agreement to continue the strike," wrote a contemporary. During the first three weeks after the February revolution the number of national guardsmen in Paris increased almost four-fold (from 57 to over 190 thousand). The overwhelming majority of the workers who had joined the National Guard in that period wore no uniform, for which a guardsman had to pay himself; therefore, to the Parisian bourgeois the new reinforcement of the National Guard looked like a force of armed proletarians. That was true to fact.

In the meantime, the Luxembourg commission started its activities. It drew up a scheme for the solution of the social problem, which was a pure Utopia. It provided for the institution of a Ministry of Labour "entrusted with a special mission to prepare a social revolution and implement a gradual abolition of the proletarian class, by peaceful means and without cataclysms".[1] The Ministry, Louis Blanc presumed, was to give assistance to labour associations (of a co-operative type). A share of their profits would go into a reserve fund proclaimed collective property. It was supposed that, spreading step by step, the network of labour associations would oust capitalist enterprises. As Louis Blanc admitted later, "all these ideas were but a twinkling of faint hopes, they were unfolding before the eyes of an explosive and triumphant crowd amidst a storm which had made this crowd omnipotent".[2]

The first meeting of the Luxembourg commission was attended by about 200 workers elected by the Parisian corporations (the so-called Luxembourg delegates). They immediately demanded a shorter working day. Louis Blanc opposed this demand, declaring that this question should be discussed in the presence of representatives of the employers. Here he encountered strong opposition from the

[1] Louis Blanc, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848*, Tome premier, Librairie internationale A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et Cᵉ, Paris, 1870, p. 161.

[2] Ibid., p. 165.

workers, and it was only after prolonged persuasion that their delegates agreed to a conference with the employers. It was held on the next day. The frightened employers agreed to meet the demands of the workers, after which the government issued a decree on a shorter working day, reducing it to 10 hours in Paris and to 11 hours in the provinces.

Already the first few steps of the Luxembourg commission conclusively demonstrated its dual role. On the one hand, it was a workers' forum from where representatives of the proletarians could bring pressure to bear on the Provisional Government and the employers. Behind the "Luxembourg delegates" stood hundreds of thousands of workers, who received information about the activities of the government commission from official publications, reports of delegates, and closely followed its deliberations. On the other hand, the Luxembourg commission, above all its official leadership, was sowing illusions in the midst of the workers, presenting what they had actually wrested from the employers as the latter's voluntary concessions. This was intended to create the impression that the labour problem could be resolved within the framework of the existing system and with the aid of an agency of the bourgeois state. Louis Blanc was very proud of his "conciliatory" role in the stormy days of February and May of 1848. The essence of his socio-political views was expressed in condensed form in this statement: "Yes, to defend the cause of the poor means—I will not tire of repeating this—to defend the cause of the rich, that is, the common interests."[1]

The leadership of the Luxembourg commission more than once acted as an arbiter in disputes between employers and workers. Sometimes, it succeeded in securing concessions from the employers, advertising them as a triumph of the "principle of justice". Objectively, however, the leaders of the commission acted in the interest of the bourgeois Provisional Government, which sought primarily to put an end to the real influence of the workers on its activities.[2] The activities of the "Luxembourg delegates" were characterised by deep-going internal contradictions. The delegates from the corporations believed that the February revolution had been a social revolution called upon to remake society in a cardinal way, so the workers more than once displayed exactly this attitude to the revolution, regarding themselves and their delegates in the Luxembourg Palace as the guarantors of its social character. At the same time, the delegates, just as the workers who had elected them, believed that the

[1] Ibid., p. 174.

[2] Institutions performing functions similar to those of the Luxembourg commission were set up in many other cities (Lyons, Marseille, Rouan, Lille, etc.). What is more, in some cities they sprang up spontaneously, without approval from the authorities.

social transformations in the name of which they had carried out the revolution could be translated into reality by the Provisional Government. They witnessed the unwillingness of this government to meet their demands and its close ties with the bourgeois circles but, at the same time, they were prone to think that the power of the proletariat demonstrated in February would compel the government to do eventually what the workers wanted it to do. In proportion as this illusion dissipated, the proletariat politically dissociated itself from the bourgeoisie. The idea of fraternity which the workers had enthusiastically supported in the early weeks and months of the revolution by no means was equivalent to their willingness to subordinate their own interests to those of the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, this was a conviction, based on their confidence in their own strength, that the bourgeoisie would be forced to forgo its interests: the changes which had occurred in the character of government were allegedly quite sufficient for a social transformation to be effected within its framework. That was a tragic illusion which evaporated as the class struggle went on. The end of that illusion meant the beginning of an uprising.

Historical experience demonstrates that the workers have to take more than one lesson of political distrust of the bourgeoisie. Originally only a small stratum of progressive workers learns this lesson. In France, for example, the followers of Blanqui already realised the selfish motives behind the actions of the bourgeoisie: they had also understood them when, after the victorious revolution carried out by the workers of Paris, the power fell into the hands of the propertied class. The stormy events in February, however, awakened and raised to political life hundreds of thousands of workers who had earlier been unfamiliar even with economic organisation. The rapidly increasing activity of the formerly passive mass of the workers was of enormous progressive significance, but it also had negative consequences, the main of them being that the sober voice of the Blanquists was drowned in cries about universal brotherhood. In the February days both the bourgeois and the proletarian masses proclaimed this slogan (although its interpretation by the two was, of course, quite different). In other words, the proletariat had to begin everything from scratch, although—which was a highly important circumstance, indeed—a group of proletarian revolutionaries utterly distrustful of the bourgeoisie continued to exist and operate. After the February revolution the vast majority of the workers followed Louis Blanc though their confidence in him was evaporating with every passing day; small groups of class-conscious proletarians, however, rallied around Blanqui and his followers.

On the initiative of the Luxembourg commission a few co-operative societies were set up—those of tailors, saddlers, and spinners; their

organisers expected to abolish the capitalist mode of production with the aid of co-operation. In reality the whole venture boiled down to a few thousand jobs created for the workers. Later when the Luxembourg commission was dissolved, the bourgeois state and capitalist competition stifled these societies.

Nevertheless, this activity gave impetus to the general process of workers' association on a professional and inter-professional basis. In March and April the associations of engravers, musical instrument-makers, tailors, printers, metal workers and building workers held their constituent meetings. A conspicuous event in this field was the formation of the General Political and Philanthropic Society of Metal Workers and Mechanics, which consisted of numerous professional sections, including metal workers, carriage-makers, mechanics, engine-drivers, engine-driver's mates, foundrymen. One of the leaders of the society was the mechanic Jean-Pierre Drevet, a delegate of the Luxembourg commission.

The political activities of the workers were originally concentrated mainly around democratic clubs. During the first month after the revolution a total of 250 such clubs were set up in Paris; later their number increased. Clubs with an exclusive workers' membership were also founded. These were, in effect, inter-professional associations of workers coming forward with social and political demands. For instance, the club of workers from the national workshops and the "Fraternity" club in district II were opened on March 22 and 23 respectively. The main slogan of the latter was freedom of association. Among its organisers were a metal worker, a shoemaker, a joiner, a mechanic, a packer, and a house-painter. Later, the workers' political activities concentrated in the associations of delegates from the corporations and the national workshops.

The associations of workers facilitated their struggle for the solution of the vital problems involved in improving their working and living conditions. The mechanics of the Charles Derosne et Cail factory, who had established their own association, succeeded in March, for instance, in securing a wage raise equivalent to one eleventh of the price of their product. Compliance with the agreement to this effect was to be supervised by a commission consisting of workers and one engineer, as well as a representative of the Luxembourg commission. The agreement had been signed by the factory owners and three mechanical workers (Drevet, Lavoye, and Colin) and approved by Louis Blanc as Minister-President of the Luxembourg commission.[1] The railwaymen's associations won an increase in the wage rates, etc.

[1] The text of the agreement is in the repository of the IML, Moscow.

Simultaneously, the workers advanced general political demands linked with the cardinal problems of the revolution. After the bourgeois units of the National Guard held a counter-revolutionary demonstration on March 16, the workers' organisations resolved to undertake a massive action in support of their demand for a deferment of the elections to the Constituent Assembly appointed by the Provisional Government for the beginning of April. The Blanqui Central Republican Society and the Central Fraternal Society of the Cabetists took the initiative. The mechanical workers of the Northern Railway took an active part in preparing the demonstration. Already at that time the idea to purge the government circulated among the workers getting ready for the demonstration.

The demonstration took place on March 17[1] under the slogan of deferment of the elections to May 31. The front-ranking workers realised that early elections would play into the hands of reaction; revolutionary Paris would not have time enough to strengthen its influence in the conservative provinces, where, except for a few cities, the labour movement was underdeveloped and public opinion was manipulated by the wealthy landowners, the rich bourgeois, and the clericals. Two hundred thousand unarmed workers with the railwaymen at the head started out from Revolution Square. When their columns approached the Town Hall, representatives of the clubs, in particular, Blanqui, Cabet, and Sobrier (the editor of the newspaper *Commune de Paris*) came forward. At first only Cabet was admitted to the palace railing. Then he was joined by members of a commission elected by the workers. They submitted a petition to representatives of the government. Louis Blanc, who spoke on its behalf, reassured the workers and promised that their requests would be given consideration. The Blanquists received this promise with caution and mistrust. One of Blanqui's associates, B. Flotte, addressing Louis Blanc in the presence of hundreds of demonstrators, publicly called him a traitor. However, the mass of the workers, who at that time still trusted the government and regarded Louis Blanc as their leader, quietly dispersed.

The gigantic demonstration of proletarians greatly impressed the Parisian bourgeois. A bourgeois newspaper later recalled: "The capital trembled at the sight of these silent and determined hordes bent on only one thing—to destroy the very foundation of society."[2] For their part, the workers acutely felt on that day the absence of a common organisation. After the demonstration on March 17 forward-looking workers, particularly the leaders of the railwaymen and the Society of Mechanical Workers, clearly realised the need to set up

[1] For greater detail see: N. E. Zastenker, *The Revolution of 1848. The Second Republic*, p. 288 *et seq.* (in Russian).

[2] Quoted from R. Gossez, op. cit., p. 247.

a centre which could provide leadership for the mass movement. Now it was, in effect, a matter of political leadership.

On March 18, on the initiative of the railwaymen, the Luxembourg delegates set up the Provisional Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers of the Seine Department. At the end of March the Central Committee itself was constituted. It nominated 20 workers for election to the Constituent Assembly. Louis Blanc added to them another fourteen representatives of the Republicans and the Socialists, many of whom held a conciliatory stance.

By setting up an independent organisation, the Luxembourg delegates made an important step which, however, did not yet mean their deliverance from the influence of Louis Blanc. The Central Committee was guided in its activities by the principles of labour organisation and strove to carry them into effect.

Towards mid-April the workers' discontent with the situation taking shape in the country had increased. Having assembled to elect their representatives to the leadership of the National Guard, they compiled a new petition. The people expect, it said, the proclamation of a democratic republic, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, and are determined to press for the organisation of labour through associations. The Central Committee of the Workers of the Seine Department called on the corporations to march on the Town Hall and submit the petition. An analogous resolution was adopted by the Society of Human Rights, a democratic club of the petty bourgeoisie. In the evening of April 15 and the next morning the workers of many large factories discussed the petition and resolved to take part in the demonstration. Some of the leaflets circulated in Paris were worded in very strong terms. One of them, signed by seven persons, read: "We spilled our blood for the republic, and we are prepared to spill it again. We believe that the Provisional Government will keep its promises. We are waiting for it as people often denied the barest necessaries of life."[1]

At the same time, the organisers of the demonstration went out of their way to prevent outbreaks of violence. Workers were urgently requested not to bear arms, which immediately evoked an angry reaction from Blanqui.

On April 16, 100,000 demonstrators marched on the Town Hall. On their way they ran into cordons of bourgeois units of the National Guard: its battalions burst into the midst of the workers' columns, trying to break them up. This was perhaps one of the most dramatic scenes of the French Revolution of 1848 during its pre-June period: a procession of 100,000 unarmed workers marching in a long and narrow column between two lines of National Guards-

[1] See the text in the repository of the IML, Moscow.

men with arms atilt, hurling abuse at the demonstrators and cursing Blanqui, Cabet, all these "Communists", and "advocates of a division of property".

After handing in the petition to an assistant of the mayor of Paris (the Provisional Government had refused to receive the workers' delegation) the demonstrators dispersed to the hooting of armed bourgeois.

The petition of April 16 reminded the bourgeoisie of the proletarian demands, the goals for which the population of Paris had fought on the barricades in February. And, although it ended with perfectly loyal slogans such as "Long live the Republic!", "Long live the Provisional Government!" the ministers saw in it, not without reason, a declaration of war on bourgeois society. It was not for nothing that armed bourgeois battalions had been moved in to oppose the unarmed workers. The attitude of the Provisional Government to the petition of April 16 had much in common with the reaction of the English Parliament to the Chartist demonstrations and petitions of the early forties. Both the English parliamentarians pluming themselves on their allegiance to traditions, and the ministers of the Provisional Government of France led to the Town Hall by the insurgent people realised that what was requested of them was impossible to do under the existing social and political system. The reaction of the Provisional Government was quick and resolute, all the more so since, in contrast to the English workers, the French proletarians in 1848 might easily rise in revolt any moment.

The elections to the Constituent Assembly were held on April 23 and 24.[1] Under the new electoral system established as a result of the revolution all French citizens over 21 years of age had the right to vote. This in itself was a great achievement of the people. The election results, however, showed the strong positions of the bourgeoisie and monarchist reaction (particularly in the provinces). Of the 880 newly-elected deputies 500 were moderate Republicans rallied around the newspaper *National*. Besides, 100 Legitimists and about 200 Orleanists declared themselves Republicans already after the February revolution. The democratic camp was represented by less than 100 deputies, with a few Socialists among them. Among the workers' candidates nominated by the Parisian proletarians were Communists—the bronze-smith Mallarmet and the shoe-maker Savary, the mechanic Drevet (the socialist President of the General Political and Philanthropic Society of Metal Workers and Mechanics), and also tailors, cooks, cobblers, bronze-smiths, and joiners who ran under the slogan of labour organisation. Of the worker candidates on the list of the Luxembourg commission only joiner Agricol Perdi-

[1] See N. E. Zastenker, *The Revolution of 1848. The Second Republic*, p. 291.

guier was elected to the Constituent Assembly. He was widely known as a champion of reorganising journeymen's guilds and ending their corporate isolation. Neither the Communists Cabet and Blanqui, nor the Democratic Socialists Raspail and Sobrier were elected. The Democratic Republican Barbès was elected only because he had been nominated in his native department.

The election results dispelled to a definite extent the workers' illusions, although they did not undermine them completely: it became clear that as long as the reins of power were in the hands of those who represented the hostile social camp, formal suffrage alone could not secure victory. The proletarians were deeply shocked and angered by the fact that even in the districts where they constituted a vast majority the elections were won by bourgeois candidates. In Limoges the indignant workers, whose candidates had been defeated, disarmed the bourgeois National Guard. For a fortnight they were virtually in control of the city. The municipal affairs were handled by a committee of workers and democratic-minded petty bourgeois. The situation changed only when government troops were moved in. They rearmed the bourgeois National Guard and dissolved the committee.

In Rouen the proletarians allied with the left-wing Republicans drew up the so-called red list: ten of their nineteen candidates were workers. The "red list", however, was defeated; only right-wing Republicans were elected. This aroused indignation within the proletarian circles, which grew to a high pitch when it became known that ballot-papers had been tempered with. At the end of April the workers took up arms. Barricades were built in the working-class districts. The fighting continued for a few days. The well-armed National Guard of Rouen suffered only light casualties, while eleven workers were killed on the spot, twenty-three died in hospital, and fifty were severely wounded. The newspaper *La Commune de Paris* wrote on May 3: "In Rouen the bourgeoisie has triumphed. Law and order have been restored—among dead bodies. The quiet of terror reigns supreme in the city."

The events in Rouen had a strong impact on the further development of the revolution. They showed that the bourgeoisie was prepared to resort to brutal and ruthless suppression of the proletariat. In the Rouen massacre, as Blanqui justly pointed out, the essence of the Provisional Government's policy found its real expression. The bourgeois republic had just come into being. Now its Constituent Assembly was to assume power vested in its predecessor—the Provisional Government—by the workers who had hurled down the July monarchy. And the very first step of the bourgeoisie was vengeance on the workers. The Rouen killings were the prelude to the June events.

The polarisation of forces in the Constituent Assembly reflected an identical process on a nationwide scale. The socialist wing was cut off from the government: Louis Blanc was expelled from it. The Luxembourg commission lost its powers of a governmental institution. The Executive Commission elected in place of the Provisional Government mainly of moderate Republicans was under constant pressure from the frankly reactionary part of the Assembly.

The situation in Paris was becoming more and more heated. In May French foreign policy became the subject of stormy debates in the democratic clubs. The Prussian militarists had suppressed an uprising of Polish patriots in Poznan, and the democratic clubs demanded that France come to the aid of the Polish people.

On May 15, on the initiative of a few democratic clubs, representatives of 100 corporations joined by part of the workers of the national workshops assembled in Bastille Square. They headed for the Bourbon Palace where the Constituent Assembly was in session. At the head of the column were the leaders of the Central Committee of the Workers of the Seine Department, the Democratic Socialists Raspail and Sobrier. Huber, a well-known figure in the democratic clubs was also here. The Blanquists also took part in the demonstration. Though they harboured no illusions concerning the outcome of this action, they sought to lend it an organised character; the Blanquists hated to keep aloof from the mass movement and were determined to share the destiny of the workers. The demonstrators broke into the conference hall of the Bourbon Palace. Louis Blanc's attempts to persuade them to leave were of no avail. Raspail read out the workers' petition demanding help to Poland. Blanqui addressed the Assembly along with other demonstrators. He spoke of Poland, as well as of the fact that the workers had long been waiting for the solution of the social problem. Blanqui also touched upon the Rouen events which had brought disgrace on the Provisional Government. Panic broke out in the Assembly. Many deputies feared a repetition of the events of February 24, when the armed people dispersed the Orleanist Chamber of Deputies.

Now, however, the situation was different. While the Guizot government had been regarded by the workers as hostile to them and the whole people, they still had definite confidence in the Constituent Assembly elected by universal ballot and were not going to take up arms against it: the workers were yet to learn its bourgeois-monarchist character eventually.

What is more, whereas on February 24 the Orleanist Chamber had nothing behind its back except a handful of influential financiers and a few companies of regular troops ready to fight for the moribund monarchy, on May 15 the Constituent Assembly was backed by the

whole of bourgeois France and scores of thousands of armed National Guardsmen in Paris.

In that situation the ringleaders of the Assembly and the Executive Commission were even interested in provoking the workers yet unprepared for armed struggle to disturb the civil peace. Huber (apparently a government agent) played into the hands of reaction. "On behalf of the people" he declared the Assembly dissolved. The demonstrators compiled the list of a new cabinet of the most prominent Communists, Socialists, and left-wing Republicans. Some of them appeared in the Town Hall. The Assembly alerted the National Guard. The workers were dispersed, and the members of the government proclaimed by the demonstrators (Raspail, Barbès, and Blanqui among them) were arrested. The workers and democratic clubs of Paris lost their most prestigious political leaders. Simultaneously, the political career of Louis Blanc began to decline precipitously. Since May 15, when he actually supported the bourgeois-monarchist Assembly his influence in the midst of the proletariat had been steadily and rapidly waning.

The by-elections to the Constituent Assembly on June 4 showed a further rightward shift of the main factions of the bourgeoisie, which was steadily sliding to the monarchist positions. The influence of the *National* group weakened. Reaction consolidated its ranks. Legitimist and Orleanist propaganda became more vociferous. Vigorous activities were opened by the followers of Prince Louis Bonaparte, who posed as a champion of the republican system.

For their part, the workers of Paris were also strengthening their ranks. In the by-elections they voted the Socialists Proudhon and Leroux and the left-wing Republicans Caussidière and Lagrange into the Constituent Assembly.

In the next few weaks the Society of United Corporations set up on the basis of the Central Committee of the Workers of the Seine Department after the dissolution of the Luxembourg commission became the nerve-centre of the Parisian workers. Another influential centre of the working-class movement in Paris—the Commission of the Central Assembly of the Delegates of the National Workshops — had been founded earlier in May. Both organisations were to play an important part in the June uprising.

The bourgeois authorities did all they could to destroy the brain of the revolutionary labour movement, to deprive it of its political leaders. A complete plan of measures was drawn up to this end. Even before the May events a campaign of slander had been organised against Blanqui, who was accused, with the aid of a forged document, of having betrayed his comrades-in-arms to the police of the July monarchy. The reactionaries circulated absurd rumours about the Communists; they were described as advocates of wanton plunder,

a redivision of property, collective wives, etc. The reactionary bourgeois and monarchist press lent the word "Communist" an abusive sense.

Cabet was subjected to baiting. To the conservative French bourgeois his name became synonymous with communism, although the contradictions in the views on revolutionary violence characteristic of this Utopian became especially apparent in 1848. He seemed to be opposed to a decisive fight between the proletarians and the bourgeois, realising clearly that, in contrast to the "uprising of 1872" in his Icaria, the balance of forces in Paris in 1848 was by no means in favour of the people. And Cabet himself was not going to play the role of Icarus. At the same time, using perfectly proletarian language which the workers of Paris would speak only three months later, he demanded on February 25 that the government "recognise the right to live working so that the head of the family would not be faced with the terrible need to abandon his family and children and ... to die fighting". Also at that time Cabet with full reason called on the workers not to press for "an immediate application of our communist doctrines": that would be adventurism. However, he invoked his former arguments in support of his realistic position, referring to the need to affirm the communist principles "by force of public opinion". Try as he would, Cabet failed to find a way out of these contradictions.[1]

Proudhonism underwent a complex evolution in the conditions of the mass movement. On February 27, 1848, Proudhon's newspaper *Le Représentant du peuple* stated that the revolution had been carried out by the workers. The programme he recommended to them contained a number of radical political demands (the organisation of a military force to fight reaction; a fraternal policy towards the peoples following the example of France; universal suffrage; the absolute right to economic and political association, etc.). However, the main social demand advanced by the Proudhonists at that time was expressed in the slogan "We have won freedom. Now it is time to organise labour!" This slogan was also set forth by other socialist groups.

Later, prescriptions for organising credit and monetary circulation began to occupy a growing place in the propaganda of the Proudhonist paper. Proudhon promised to create with their aid a "society without taxes, without loans, without paper money, without a maximum, without requisitions, without bankruptcies, without the agrar-

[1] Later, when the workers rose in rebellion, Cabet called it a "social uprising", a war "for the right to work and live". Having analysed the "mistakes of the insurgents", he arrived at this basic conclusion: they had no plan and they "had not taken measures to disorganise and paralise the enemy". (E. Cabet, *Insurrection du 23 juin*, Paris, 1848, pp. 17, 50).

jan law, without taxes for the poor, without national workshops, without state interference, without hindrances to commerce and industry, without encroachments on property."[1] The main emphasis in the propaganda of *Le Représentant du peuple* gradually shifted in the direction of the Proudhonian panacea of a "public bank", which only distracted the people of Paris from political struggle. The Proudhonists increasingly relegated their political slogans to the background; the projects of social reforms they recommended were aimed, in effect, at mitigating the political contradictions, since they were designed to establish harmony between the interests of "labour and property". Proudhon's incantations warning against political struggle (which he interpreted either as elections or as bloodshed, which would destroy "the whole society") often caused irritation among the workers and discredited the socialist ideas in their eyes. The tailor Constant Hilbey known within the circles of the Parisian workers as a staunch follower of Marat, criticised Proudhon's views as follows: "Thus, the property he wants to abolish is merely abuse of property, and we are too young (in Proudhon's opinion) to abolish this property. What terrible nonsense!"[2]

Louis Blanc and Proudhon seemed to hold opposite views, if one has in mind their socialist concepts. Blanc advocated a determined interference of what he regarded as a revolutionary state in social relations. Proudhon actively opposed such interference. However, they were of the same mind on the problem of cardinal importance: both insistently advertised association of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat along the lines of "organisation of work".

Objectively, however, Proudhon's activities had another important aspect at that time. Exposing to the proletarians the "non-worker" character of the revolution and the anti-labour policy of the government, Proudhon, wittingly or unwittingly, helped dispel the illusions about bourgeois government. As it often happens in times of revolution, of the ideological schemes current in their midst the workers assimilated only those which could be of real benefit to them; indeed, the Proudhonist newspaper was not only a collection of articles presenting reactionary Utopian plans of remaking society but also an anti-government political organ.

In the middle of May and especially in the early weeks of June 1848 the political trust of the workers in bourgeois government melted away; it became increasingly obvious that an armed conflict was inevitable.

The idea of establishing their own political institution, People's Convention, matured in the midst of the workers. On May 13, Sobri-

[1] *Le Représentant du peuple*, April 7, 1848.

[2] *Le socialisme et la révolution française* par Constant Hilbey, Rédacteur du *Journal des Sans-Culottes*. From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

er's newspaper *La Commune de Paris* published a petition addressed to the Constituent Assembly, signed by a group of "representatives of labour" with socialist workers and leaders of workers' co-operative associations among them. The petition was a document of a transitional type: it still bore an imprint of political reformism but, at the same time, evidenced that it was rapidly losing ground. The petition demanded the sanctioning of popular representation which, along with the Constituent Assembly, would be a genuine body of government and assume defence of all proclaimed rights of the people. The authors of the petition insisted on the appointment to the People's Convention of "delegates of the people" from among the members of the democratic clubs, with which it would be permanently in touch. It was a matter, in effect, of establishing a legal form of dual power; it was not accidental that the proposal for establishing the People's Convention followed the dissolution of the Luxembourg commission. The petition was clearly aimed at establishing side by side with the bourgeois Constituent Assembly a convention directly linked with the workers. Of course, the workers were mistaken in their belief that the two forms of power radically different for their social content and class support could coexist peacefully without suppressing or subordinating one another. Nevertheless, the very idea of organising popular representation as a body supervising the Constituent Assembly expressed an impulse towards political independence, an apprehension lest the interests of the workers fail to be satisfied within the framework of the Constituent Assembly itself and its government. Tendencies of this kind frightened the powers that be, because they came from the armed and increasingly well-organised workers; the bourgeois realised that the idea of dual power in the conditions of the growing political self-awareness of the workers meant nothing less than a striving, if only uncertain, for the workers' absolute rule.

The revolutionary Paul-Louis Deflotte, close to the Blanquists and also influenced by the Fourierist views (a combination not infrequent in those months) explained the inevitability of the imminent workers' uprising as follows: "The government today (May 14.—*Auth.*) is hanging by a thread, and I am convinced that we shall have a full-scale revolution at the end of June. This is easy to understand. The government has assumed too great commitments in relation to the national workshops, and their renunciation will cause a terrible crisis. Numerous workers of the national workshops who live in abject poverty due to a shortage of resources will inevitably take up arms to force the government to prolong its assistance. Since it is impossible to meet their demands a terrible struggle will flare up. The government and the present society will be easily defeated." And further: "We shall easily get the upper hand in the provinces. We

have sent our forces to different places. By force of arms or by revolution we will force the peasants into agreement and let us organise the Commune." Deflotte completed his assessment of the situation in these words: "The February revolution raised the problem of property and labour. This problem must be solved."[1]

Significantly, the workers of the national workshops responded with anger to the statement of the monarchist Dupin in the Constituent Assembly on May 16. His speech, especially his appeal for "compelling the workers to earn the money they are getting for their idleness today" aroused general indignation. Thousands of leaflets with a declaration of protest signed by representatives of the 115,000 workers of the national workshops and approved by several clubs were circulated in Paris.[2]

In early June 1848 the Society of United Corporations (led by the Socialist Pierre Vinçard) started the publication of its own newspaper *Journal des travailleurs*.[3] The materials it published were like a barometer indicating an approaching storm. They clearly evidenced the workers' growing mistrust of the bourgeois state, their increasing desire of independent organisation and political action, their mounting discontent. The first issue of the newspaper on June 4 opened with the appeal "To All Working People", which read: "...February 24 was but the political prologue of a serious drama to be concluded by the full and radical emancipation of those engaged in productive work." The workers who sacrificed their lives to defend the rights of the nation wished "that nothing of what they produce be taken away from them", they wished "that these words—the right to work—written in declarations become a reality", "that *association* in whatever form becomes the only banner to which all working people would rally", "that the *word* and *notion* of exploitation be stricken out of the vocabulary of all government institutions, that privileges in whatever form be abolished as early as possible".

The leaders of the Society of United Corporations in a letter signed by Pierre Vinçard and the Society's Vice-President Auguste Blum, a stone mason, published in the same issue voiced their solidarity with the workers of the national workshops over their response to Dupin. "We are so much in agreement with your declaration," they said, "that we regret the fact that you did not warn us in advance,

---

[1] Quoted from *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français*, publié sous la direction de Jean Maîtron, I[ère] partie: 1789-1864, t. II. Les éditions ouvrières, Paris, 1965, p. 35.

[2] *Les 115,000 ouvriers des Ateliers Nationaux à M. Dupin.* From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[3] Six copies of this newspaper (*Journal des travailleurs*, fondé par les ouvriers délégués au Luxembourg) are in the repository of the library of the IML, Moscow.

because we would have deemed it our duty to sign it together with you. Our misfortunes and our hopes are the same, and nothing of what is being done for our common cause should escape our attention."

The slogans advanced in June were identical in form to those of March and April: a fair share of the products of labour to the worker! Nevertheless, the proletarian demands were altogether different in tone than those in the early months of the revolution. They became insistent. "War on capital" became one of the programme principles of the Society of United Corporations. Its leaders were aware of the fact that their activities were political. The Manifesto of delegates of the corporations to the workers of the Seine Department stated: "Our aim, brothers, is to liberate the proletariat and to gain our social rights. This question is closely bound up with the political question."

As development proceeded, the workers' declarations were couched in more and more resolute terms. "Let us organise and set up a permanent committee of delegates from all workshops," read one of them. "They will have to keep watch over the moves of our enemies and inform us immediately. When the hour strikes, we will rise all to a man to crush them without mercy, because they will never respond to whatever is noble in us. The struggle will be interminable, and it is time we put an end to it. With unity and courage, we will win everything."[1]

On June 11, *Journal des travailleurs* published an article by Vinçard entitled "Strikes". It is significant as testimony to the fact that although the workers had not yet finally renounced the idea of a civil peace, they saw their enemy in the bourgeoisie more and more clearly and guessed its intentions. The author pointed out the vast scope of the strike struggles in the country. Analysing their causes, he stated that the capitalists had violated "their commitments with regard to the people who shed their blood on the barricades, pursuing no other goal except justice". The actions of the industrialists were motivated by "their egoistic instincts". Besides that, they "shamelessly slander those who dedicate themselves to the common interests". Expressing the indignation of the proletarians, Vinçard answers the questions he posed himself as follows: "What will happen after all? Will lawlessness triumph over law? No! Will the workers have to return to their workshops without a better reward for their labours? Should they submit to the terms being imposed upon them? No!" And finally: "Should the workers resort to violence to share in the fruits of their work?" No, they ought not to do that. "When we ask this question, ask it with trepidation, we feel the

[1] Quoted from R. Gossez, op. cit., p. 298.

beats of our hearts because we know what it takes to rise in revolt and endure its hardships.... We speak without anger or bitterness, we fear lest the evil caused by strikes be multiplied if the people in power, if the big industrialists do not realise what their true role must be. Struggle and crude force can only lead to boundless chaos, a hurricane, the most violent storm the end of which nobody can predict."

The tone of the article signed by the leader of an organisation uniting thousands and thousands of workers was conciliatory only at first glance. The author, it is true, emphasised the workers' reluctance to resort to violence and unleash a civil war. Nevertheless the main points of the article were nothing like admonitions in the spirit of Louis Blanc. Vinçard unswervingly followed this idea: the workers do not want an armed conflict, but because of the irreconcilable position of the capitalists and the authorities, a conflict is becoming inevitable; a civil war is near at hand, and the mounting tide of strikes is its prelude and even beginning. Vinçard's article was a stern warning from the workers to the bourgeoisie and its government.

Their sentiments on the eve of the uprising are also vividly illustrated by a leaflet written by the foreman Auguste Sibert, one of the leaders of the workers of the national workshops, and printed in 100,000 copies. The Society of United Corporations supported its message. "We are not of those who *ask for alms*," Sibert wrote. Addressing the bourgeoisie, he went on: "You know that we can force you to cry for mercy, Messrs. *Contented*, to ask for favours if you find holes where you can hide yourselves in those days when our anger caused by our suffering explodes. ...Don't forget, Messrs. monarchists, that we have carried out a third revolution not with intent to remain your slaves; we came out against your social organisation—the only cause of the chaos and misery rending apart the modern society in which brute force is the only law." The workers, he said further, will achieve their emancipation only through association: "We are convinced that as a result of association we shall assume power and shall have no more masters."

The leaflet ended in a stern warning: "The time is not far off when to your dismay you will no longer own slaves and when the word 'worker' will be the only and genuine title of nobility." The leaflet was signed "on behalf of all workers".[1]

In the days immediately preceding the uprising Louis Blanc's prestige sharply declined. This is evidenced by a letter *Journal des*

[1] "Réponse des ouvriers qui ne sont pas du bon Paris, aux paroles qu'a prononcées M. Dupin le royaliste, à l'Assemblée Nationale". From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

travailleurs addressed to him in the middle of June. Describing in sombre tones the situation in the country and the plight of the workers, the anonymous author rebuked Louis Blanc for his silence, whereas formerly he had called on the workers to fight to the death; they were worried and amazed by his silence: "If the head of the family behaves in this way, this is a bad omen for his children."

The activity of workers' organisations increased with every passing day, meetings of corporations were held frequently: of grinders on June 13, of shoe-makers on June 14; many corporations became consolidated and widened their activities; the joiners formed a central committee which directed the work of the district committees; the Fraternal Association of Building Workers of France (house painters, glaziers, decorators) was founded; the Society of United Corporations started to set up its committees in Paris districts and its documents were discussed in special committees. The last traces of "peaceful" illusions were disappearing among the workers. They felt growing resentment and discontent and expected nothing but trouble from the government. In its last issue before the uprising *Journal de travailleurs* gave a grave warning to the bourgeoisie: "We placed *three months of misery* at the service of the republic. It demanded a fourth month of us, and we agreed. But this is our last tribute, the last one—can you hear?"

It is important to note that the leaders of the united corporations and the workers of the national workshops frequently warned the proletarians against possible provocations and urged self-restraint. The appeal for observing law and order which their leaders often addressed to the workers in late May and the earlier half of June should not be interpreted only as an expression of trust in the bourgeoisie (although this motive was also in evidence). This was a warning against traps and scattered actions so as not to give the bourgeoisie and its hirelings a chance to defeat the working people of Paris peacemeal.[1] In a special leaflet of June 1 the workers of the national

[1] In that period one could read or hear the appeal "Spare property!" which the leaders of workers' organisations addressed to the proletarians. It often concurred with an obvious intention to make radical changes in the relations of property in favour of the proletariat. "Spare property" meant, in effect, only one thing: to refrain from damaging machinery, from wanton terrorism, from arbitrary acts of class vengeance. This advice by no means evidenced the workers' respect for the institution of bourgeois private property itself, whose prestige the mass of them undermined and destroyed, deliberately or unconsciously, by their revolutionary enthusiasm. Significant in this respect was the appeal from the workers of the Northern Railway concerning the strike which had started there in May. The allegation, the workers declared, that they were destroying tracks was slander; indeed, it was they, the workers, that had ensured order on the railway in February. The railwaymen were firmly confident that "the position of the workers can be improved right now, when the mass of the suffering is under the protection of the republic; it is mandatory to provide for such distribu-

workshops laid bare the intention of reaction to circulate rumours that they were sowing discord and disorder and to incite the people of Paris against them. The leaflet signed by the leaders of both organisations read: "Wait, wait for a few more days, preserving the self-control you have already shown, which is a sign of real strength."[1]

The imminence of a class battle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie lent special urgency to the problem of organisation of the working class. This process was running a fairly rapid course as compared with the pre-revolutionary times, and developing in many directions. Associations of corporations and economic associations of a co-operative type were being set up. The workers rallied around the democratic clubs, the strike committees and delegates of the national workshops. However, no general organising centre was ever established. It was only during the last few weeks before the uprising that the two biggest organisations, the Society of United Corporations and the delegates of the national workshops, took some steps towards unification, but even these associations were not of a vanguard character. They saw their purpose in extending their influence to all workers of a given trade. The territorial associations of sections of individual corporations set up in May and June worked in the same direction. In other words, the process of organisation of the proletariat failed to culminate in the formation of a proletarian party. For all that, the establishment of the abovementioned associations was a step forward in the development of the proletarian movement in France.

The bourgeoisie was preparing for the impending confrontation. Its strategy was based on efforts to split up the working class by pitting the proletarians receiving "aid" from the government (and therefore dependent on it) against the workers who had retained their jobs and set up their own independent organisations. Simultaneously, preparations were under way for closing down the national workshops, which employed a large mass of workers thrown out of work by the general economic stagnation.[2]

The government, of course, publicly denied the existence of such plans. At the end of May, the Minister of Public Works Trélat addressed the delegates of the foremen's club of the national workshops with an admonishing letter, assuring them that "it is not a question of forcible closure of the national workshops but one of gradual

---

tion of the fruits of labour as would not let the profiteer appropriate what belongs to the worker". Thus, in the railwaymen's appeal the call "Spare property!" was clearly combined with the idea of redistribution of the "fruits of labour" (*Grève du Chemin de fer du Nord*. From the repository of the IML, Moscow).

[1] *A tous les travailleurs*. From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[2] In June the workshops employed over 100,000 persons.

preparation for a return to real work and for relieving the current plight of every family and, indeed, the whole country".[1] In early June, in an appeal signed by a commission of delegates of the national workshops, the workers clearly expressed their views on this question. "What are we demanding? That our right to work be taken seriously, decreed and sanctioned. We are working people, we hate to live in idleness, we want productive work. For this, organise work in such a way as to find effective application for our abilities."[2]

The government of the bourgeoisie, however, had no intention, let alone possibility, to deal with this matter seriously. It was only waiting for an opportune moment to deal a decisive blow to the workers. On June 21, by order of the Executive Commission the national workshops were practically closed down; their workers were to be deported to the provinces. This action not only aggravated their lot. It dashed the hope of the Parisian proletarians for social reforms; and while expecting them (before the closure of the national workshops) they had refrained from an uprising and civil war. Now the hostility of the bourgeois republic to the proletarians was demonstrated with perfect clarity.

The reaction of the working masses was instantaneous. Scores of thousands of proletarians took up arms in a common transport of rage. Cannon went into action. That was the outbreak of a four-day battle between labour and capital, the first great civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie

THE JUNE UPRISING OF THE PARISIAN WORKERS

During the uprising and in later years the enemies of the working class circulated numerous fabrications to exonerate the bourgeoisie from its guilt in the brutal massacre of French proletarians who had put the reins of power in its hands a few months earlier.[3] One of such tales alleged that the uprising of the Parisian workers had been the result of a conspiracy. Actually, however, as it follows from the foregoing, until the middle of May even in the most politically active circles of the workers an armed uprising had been viewed as an unwelcome development, an extreme form of resolving the acute social and political conflict. The events of May 15 brought the work-

---

[1] *Réponse aux Délégués du Club des Brigadiers des Ateliers Nationaux*. From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[2] *Protestation des Ouvriers des Ateliers Nationaux*.—From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[3] For greater detail see: L. A. Bendrikova, *French Historiography of the Revolution of 1848-1849 in France (1848-1968)*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 130, 150 *et seq.*, 240, 278 (in Russian).

ing people of Paris face to face with the harsh realities which brought it home to them more and more forcefully that an armed conflict was inevitable. Things were coming to a head. Unlike the government, however, the workers were not preparing for a showdown. The government, most of its members at any rate, was seeking for a pretext to attack the proletariat and destroy its vanguard, changing thereby the existing balance of forces in Paris in its favour. True, none of those who planned to provoke a conflict expected the workers' resistance to become so strong as to threaten the very foundation of bourgeois government.

On June 22, the workers learned of the closure of the national workshops. On the same day, 100,000 people started to converge towards the centre of Paris. The streets in the downtown districts were thronged by marching columns chanting "We shall not leave! We shall not leave!". In the afternoon of June 22 a crowd of 1,500 workers led by the Blanquist Louis Pujol, a foreman of the national workshops, marched on the Luxembourg Palace where the Executive Commission had set up its offices in place of the dissolved Commission for the Workers' Affairs. The workers' delegation was received by Minister of Public Works Marie. His response to their protests was unambiguous: "If the workers refuse to go to the provinces, we will drive them out by force. Can you hear? By force!"

That was yet another stunning blow to the hopes and illusions of the proletarians. Those who demonstrated in front of the Luxembourg Palace decided to assemble near the Pantheon in the evening of the same day. At 5 o'clock numerous columns started to arrive here from the suburbs. The atmosphere steadily grew tenser. At night barricades were erected spontaneously in different districts of Paris.[1] By June 23 their number had grown to more than 500. The National Guard, which had been placed on the alert, was going slow. Most of the men of its eighth legion were from working-class families, the ninth legion also sympathised with the workers. The bourgeois alarmed by the tocsin arrived in small numbers and were embarrassed to see their weakness compared with the mighty columns of workers coming from the suburbs. It was not until a few hours later, when the bourgeois learned that they could rely on regular troops and mobile guardsmen,[2] that their units were ready to fight.

[1] The facts of the June uprising have been borrowed mainly from the Paris press of 1848, as well as from leaflets, posters and newspaper clippings preserved in the library repository of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism under the Central Committee of the CPSU. In addition, the author has extensively used materials in the book of J. Dautry, *1848 et la II-e République*; Paris, 1957, and the article by A. I. Molok, "Some Problems of the History of the June Uprising in Paris in 1848", *Voprosy istorii*, No. 12, 1952, pp. 71-97.

[2] The mobile guard had been formed as far back as February 25 by a decree of the Provisional Government. Recruited among the declassed element and the

The War Minister, General Cavaignac, was biding his time. He knew that the workers were building barricades and preparing for battle. He expected that by the time his divisions joined battle the workers would have taken up positions on the barricades and would not mix with soldiers and National Guardsmen so that his troops could see only the entrenched enemy before them. The General was determined to give the workers of Paris a decisive battle which would "put an end to all this"once and for all. Garnier-Pagès, a member of the Executive Commission, told the commander of a National Guard battalion: "Don't interfere. Cavaignac has his own plan; he is concentrating large forces which will overrun the barricades by powerful thrusts." According to later evidence by the city police prefect, on June 23 Cavaignac did not rule out the probability that he would have to withdraw his troops from Paris and give the showdown battle out of city limits. To the prefect this plan seemed insane: "This would mean a retreat before a victorious rebellion, leaving it in control of Paris, in control of the treasury, in control of the French Bank, in control of post and telegraph, and, finally, in control of all ministries and perhaps in control of all France!" The prefect was apprehensive lest in case of failure of Cavaignac's plan the workers install a provisional government in the Town Hall. Bourgeois Paris was seized with panic. The tocsin rang incessantly.

The first armed clash on a massive scale broke out at the entrance to Saint-Denis Street shortly before noon. The street was blocked by a barricade built of overturned carriages and cobble-stones. A unit of National Guardsmen attacked it and was hurled back. Within an hour Paris was in the flames of an uprising. Its scale became obvious towards the end of the day; the whole eastern part of the city was a scene of fighting. The line of demarcation ran across the suburb of Saint-Jacques, along Saint-Martin Street as far as Saint-Denis Boulevard, then turned westward a little and extended along Saint-Denis Boulevard to Poissonnière Street. The battle in Paris assumed an enormous scale. The ground shook with the thunder of cannonade. The hatred and bitterness of the fighters had no limit. It was a civil war at its height.

General Cavaignac assumed command of the National Guard troops loyal to the government, 12,000 mobile guardsmen and 29,000 infrantrymen, cavalrymen and artillerymen. They formed three assault groups. The first, under the command of Lamoricière, was fighting in the Saint-Denis neighbourhood to hold back the insurgents advancing towards the Town Hall from the north-east. The second group commanded by Bedeau pulled into position in front of the

jobless it was immediately granted a privileged status. Mobile guardsmen who were paid fairly good money by the government were prepared to fight anybody on government orders.

Town Hall. The third one, under the command of Damesme, was trying to force back the insurgents advancing on the Town Hall from the south-east. For three hours Lamoricière's troops were heavily engaged in the Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin neighbourhoods. It was with great difficulty that they captured the barricades on La Fayette Square defended by mechanical workers of the Northern Railway. At about four o'clock in the afternoon they ran into fierce resistance of the workers in the Temple quarter and asked for reinforcements. At about the same time similar requests came from Generals Bedeau and Damesme.

The night of June 23 offered hope to the insurgents. News of a workers' uprising in Marseilles reached Paris. The Paris insurgents did not yet know that the workers of Marseilles had been defeated and expected the workers of all large cities of France to follow their example. At night firing went on in the vicinity of the Northern Railway terminus, in Temple, in La Cité, in the Saint-Jacques suburb. The workers continued to build defenceworks. Groups of barricades were defended by workers of the same trade: carriage-makers, bronze-smiths, joiners, plywood-makers.

By a decree of June 24 the Constituent Assembly clamped a state of siege on the city. All executive powers were vested in Cavaignac. The Executive Commission resigned. Units of the National Guards arrived in Paris from Amiens, Senlis, Rambouillet and Versailles to fight the insurgents. Railwaymen tried to stop troop trains. Punitive troops from the provinces sometimes had to make their way to Paris on foot. The workers of some cities put up resistance to national guardsmen heading for Paris.

In the morning of June 24 fighting resumed. The insurgents captured the mayor's offices in the eighth and ninth districts. The editor of the newspaper *L'Organisation du travail* Lacollonge, one of the best insurgent commanders, was appointed mayor of the eighth district. The insurgents finally fought their way to the Town Hall. Late in the day they held a parley with General Duvivier. It proved fruitless. Towards evening government troops had succeeded in pressing the insurgents back from the Town Hall. Nevertheless, the workers staunchly held on to the barricades stretching along Saint-Antoine Street from Bastille Square.

In the northern section the workers were attacked by two divisions: the National Guardsmen under General Lebreton and the forces commanded by General Lamoricière. Their attacks, however, were fended off by the resistance of the barricade fighters near Clos St. Lazare. In the southern section, the troops of General Damesme advanced towards the Pantheon. To break the crust of the workers' resistance they moved forward artillery. After two hours of fierce fighting the insurgents abandoned the Pantheon and entrenched

themselves in the neighbouring by-streets. General Damesme was wounded and handed over command to General Bréa. His troops continued to press the insurgents until nightfall. As a result the latter lost their positions on the left bank of the Seine which shielded their main stronghold—Saint-Antoine Street and the suburb of the same name.

Towards the end of the day the area of fighting narrowed, but co-operation between individual insurgent groups improved.

On June 25, the newspaper *La Réforme*, commenting on the events in Paris the day before, wrote: "Yesterday came to an end to the crackle of gun-fire and the terrible cries of a civil war. The battle lasted all night. An hour after midnight cannonade and rapid firing rang out in the Saint-Jacques quarter and especially in La Cité. The ominous tocsin of the Saint-Severin Church was heard from afar. The battle resumed with still greater ferocity with the first light of day. At night large new forces arrived, and regular troops took up positions all along the inner circle of the boulevards. The workers captured La Cité, the suburbs of Temple and Saint-Antoine, the checkpoints of Rochechouard, Poissonnière, and La Villette."

A list of candidates for a new Provisional Government was circulated on the barricades. Among them were the prisoners of Vincennes: Blanqui, Barbès and Raspail, as well as (such is the irony of events) persons seated on the Assembly—Louis Blanc, Caussidière, Leroux, Proudhon. The list was completed with the name of Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, a political adventurer and the author of demagogic pamphlets "in defence of misery". The mayor's office of the eighth district, which had become the political headquarters of the rebellion, demanded a democratic and social republic, punishment of those who have not kept their promises, the withdrawal of troops from Paris and free association of labour with assistance from the state.

The monarchist wing in the Assembly was in confusion. The supporters of the Orleanist Thiers demanded that the Assembly leave Paris and settle in Versailles. Cavaignac answered: "The departure of the Assembly would ruin everything. If Monsieur Thiers goes on talking like that, I will put him before a firing squad."

On June 25, Cavaignac committed all his reserves. In the northern section, General Lebreton received reinforcements—a few battalions of National Guardsmen from the provinces. He captured Clos St. Lazare and the village of La Chapelle inhabited by workers of the Northern Railway. In an effort to force their way to the north-east through Temple Lamoricière's troops again came up against ferocious resistance. It was not until noon when the insurgents ran out of ammunition that government forces succeeded in capturing the barricades barring access to the Saint-Antoine suburb. The forces

under Generals Perrot and Duvivier, who had been wounded and replaced by General Négrier, were also moved against this stronghold of the insurgents. In the afternoon Négrier ordered an attack on the suburb, which was repulsed. Négrier himself was mortally wounded.

In the meantime, the troops of General Perrot penetrated through Saint-Antoine Street towards Bastille Square. It was girdled by a giant barricade, with a red banner hoisted in the centre. The insurgents entrenched in half-ruined houses were fighting back desperately. Government troops brought in artillery. The Archbishop of Paris, Mgr. Affre, who attempted to conciliate the combatants, was mortally wounded.

The fighting in Bastille Square lasted all day.

Towards June 26 the Saint-Antoine suburb became the last pocket of resistance. The core of its defenders consisted of 10,000 woodworkers. They knew that they were doomed: the provinces had not revolted.[1] Their determination to fight for their righteous cause, however, did not falter. This was clearly expressed during a parley with the enemy representatives. The workers' delegates who came to see General Perrot and Minister of the Interior Recurt, who was at his command post, declared their readiness to cease fire on the following terms: the decree on the national workshops shall be declared null and void, the Constituent Assembly shall proclaim the right to work, the army forces shall be pulled out of Paris, the imprisoned workers' leaders released from Fort Vincennes, the people shall be allowed to draw up the Constitution of the republic themselves. This was, in effect, a demand for the overthrow of the existing government.

After some time the workers' delegates went to see Cavaignac. The latter refused to discuss any terms except unconditional surrend-

[1] During the June uprising isolated workers' disturbances took place in Marseilles, Le Havre, Rouen, Limoges, Dijon, Angers, and in the workmen's settlements in the area of Lyons (See A. I. Molok, *The June Days of 1848 in Paris*, Moscow, 1948, p. 110 *et seq.* (in Russian). However, the Constituent Assembly and the government received incomparably greater aid: 53 departments of France sent to Paris scores of thousands of National Guardsmen. Analysing the reasons for the hostile attitude of the mass of the peasants towards the revolutionary workers of Paris, Engels wrote: "What did the stubborn, narrow-minded peasant know of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, of the democratic social republic, of organisation of labour, of things, whose main conditions and causes could never become manifest within the narrow limits of his village! And when he sometimes gained from the dirty bourgeois newspapers a vague idea of what was going in Paris, when the bourgeois addressed to him a loud call against the Parisian workers ... these people who want to carve up all property, all the land,—then his screams of rage became still fiercer, and the peasant's indignation had no limit.... 'Let this damned Paris blow up tomorrow!'—this was the least they could wish for." (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1969, Bd. 5, S. 474.)

er. Having returned to the barricades, the truce envoys announced Cavaignac's reply. As testified by an eyewitness, the response was a thunderous roar of six thousand voices: "Death to Cavaignac! Death to the butcher of the people!"

The final act of the heroic tragedy of the Parisian proletariat was opened. The troops of General Perrot launched into attack. In the unequal battle the insurgents lost their main barricade. Under cover of 65 barricades located one after another in the Saint-Antoine suburb, their units retreated, trying to break away from their pursuers. At about 11 a.m. on June 26, 1848 the workers gave up resistance. At 13.30 Sénard, President of the Constituent Assembly, exclaimed in his opening address at its session: "First, the main news: everything is over!" The audience responded with shouts of "Bravo!".

The whole of bourgeois France was jubilant. The press of different affiliations, just as the orators, vied with one another in extolling the valour and loyalty of the forces of order. Indeed, after the first few hours of confusion and hesitation government supporters fought with great ferocity. For the bourgeois in the uniform of National Guard it was, in the final analysis, a matter of defence of the social order which safeguarded their property. And when his property is at stake, the bourgeois is firm and ruthless.[1]

The reasons for the ferocity of the mobile guardsmen were different. Most of them were "children of the suburbs", young lumpen-proletarians bribed and depraved by the bourgeoisie; they fought against their own brothers, relatives and neighbours with the thoughtlessness of youth and the insanity of social outcasts. Regular troops fought professionally. Isolated by their caste system and constrained by the rigid rules of military discipline, they regarded the insurgents as an enemy they had to fight in accordance with the regulations and the orders of their officers.

The ferocity of the bourgeois in the uniform of the National Guard and of mobile guardsmen was expressed not so much in their "military exploits" as in their wanton atrocities.

On June 25, in an appeal to the insurgent workers, General Cavaignac wrote: "You are told that you are awaited by ruthless punishment; come to us, come as repenting brothers obedient to the law. The republic will meet you with open arms." That was a blatant lie.

When, on June 23, Victor Considérant, speaking in the Constituent Assembly on behalf of the Socialists, proposed an appeal to the workers reaffirming the promises given them earlier, he heard the answer: "Rioters are not admonished, they are beaten." Mass executions began. Captive insurgents were shot with refined brutality,

[1] See Daniel Stern, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848*, Vol. 3, Paris, 1878, pp. 199-200.

point-blank, in the presence of their relatives and near ones. People bearing arms arrested on the street or simply dressed as workers were shot on the spot. The figure mentioned in the literature—1,500 shot without trial or investigation—is evidently played down.

The bourgeois press, trying to whitewash the National and mobile Guardsmen, attempted to shift the blame for these atrocities on the insurgents. This lie, however, holds no water. It was disproved by numerous eyewitness accounts. The well-known historian Ernest Renan, an eyewitness of the fighting, wrote in a letter to his sister: "I saw the insurgents at close range. We were in their hands for a full day and night, and I can tell you that one could not wish for greater respect, honesty and frankness; they were infinitely superior in moderation to those they were fighting against. *The atrocities were exclusively the work of the defenders of law and order.*"[1] The journalist Louis Ménard, who had been in the thick of events, testified that the insurgents treated captive soldiers like brothers rather than prisoners and released many of them.[2]

One episode during the trial by a military court of the workers who had shot General de Bréa was quite significant. When the presiding judge declared that the defendants were charged with murder, one of them, the worker Nourry, answered: "Call it murder if you like. As for me, it was not murder but an act of war. I was beaten up with rifle-butts..." The presiding judge again called Nourry a murderer. "Save this name for yourself and the other judges. *You* are the murderers," answered the prisoner.[3]

Describing the reign of terror that followed the June events, Alexander Herzen wrote: "Who dared to assume such bloody responsibility? The Algerian generals were the butchers, the executors of the will of the Assembly which acted under the influence of Sénard and Marrast, and Sénard and Marrast expressed the will of the bourgeoisie—this is the culprit. No, esteemed bourgeois, enough of your talk of the *red* republic and its thirst for blood; when it was shedding blood it believed that there was no other way; it doomed itself to this tragic lot and chopped off heads with a clear conscience, while you only took vengeance—meanly, safely, on the sly."[4]

Surviving insurgents were brutally tortured. This is how Gustave Flaubert described the tragedy of the prisoners incarcerated in the dungeons of the Tuileries Palace. "There were nine hundred of them

---

[1] Quoted in Jean Dautry, *1848 et la II^e République*, Éditions Sociales, Paris, 1957, p. 198.

[2] Ibid., pp. 198-99.

[3] *Conseil de guerre. Assassinat du général de Bréa et du Capitaine Mangin.* From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[4] A. I. Herzen, "Letters from Italy", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Moscow, 1955, pp. 154-55 (in Russian).

crammed in filth, black with stains of gun-powder and clotted blood, shaking from fever and crying in rage; when somebody died, the corpse was left where it was.... When prisoners clung to the air-hole National Guardsmen ... stabbed them with bayonets at random so they could not shake the bars loose. These soldiers had no mercy. Those who had not taken part in the fighting wanted to distinguish themselves. That was cowardice on the rampage. Vengeance was taken for the newspapers, for the clubs, for the meetings, and for the doctrines—for everything that had been causing exasperation for three months..."[1]

The repressive machine of bourgeois justice was working with full steam on. Thousands were exiled for their part in the uprising. The list of deportees gives the lie to the fabrications that the June uprising was the work of the anti-social element, idlers and parasites. The number of unskilled labourers was large, indeed, but they were not a majority. Most of the exiles were workmen of the Paris industries—joiners, jewellers, tailors, upholsterers, bronze-simths, copper engravers and other skilled workers. Among those deported on the night of August 5 were 77 wood-workers, 63 metal-workers, 18 printers, 16 tailors, 39 stone-masons and building workers, 23 workers of the utilities, 35 food industry workers, 20 tanners, 15 mechanics, and also watch-makers, armourers, gas-fitters, railwaymen, etc.[2] In other words, those deported from Paris were *workers*; this was evidence of the class character of the uprising.

Reviewing the results of the reprisals against the proletarians by the bourgeois driven to frenzy, Marx wrote: "...the plebeians are tormented by hunger, abused by the press, forsaken by the doctors, called thieves, incendiaries and galley-slaves by the respectabilities; their wives and children are plunged into still greater misery and the best of those who have survived are sent overseas. It is the *right* and the *privilege of the democratic press* to place laurels on their clouded threatening brow."[3]

From the very outset the June uprising was remarkable for its exceptional massiveness and the firm cohesion of the insurgents. Practically, all main sections of the Parisian proletariat joined in the uprising. To comprehend the causes of this the following circumstances should be taken into consideration.

---

[1] Gustave Flaubert, *L'Éducation sentimentale*, Editions Gallimard et Librairie Française, Paris, 1965, p. 377.

[2] Calculated from data published in *Liste générale des prisonniers transférés dans la nuit du 5 au 6 août 1848*. From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 149. According to rough estimates, 15,000 insurgents were killed and wounded during and after the uprising.

Never before had the communist (Blanquist and Cabetist) and socialist (mainly the Fourierist and Louis Blanc's and partly the Saint-Simonian) views fused on such a wide scale in the French labour movement as it was the case in Paris in 1848. All of them found common expression in the slogans of "organisation of labour", "the abolition of the exploitation of man by man", "the right to work", which had become deeply implanted in the minds of the working masses. The great variety of political views—the revolutionary determination of the Blanquists combined with their striving for organisation, the more cautious position of Cabet and his followers, the reformism of the Epigoni of Fourierism, the criticism of political struggle by Proudhon, on the one hand, and the "red republicanism" of the revolutionaries like Constant Hilbey, a consistent advocate of Marat's ideas, on the other, which coexisted with all the aforesaid views did not prevent the workers from joint action. In the minds of the armed proletarians who had carried out the revolution and were determined to continue it, different socio-political schemes acquired the class, revolutionary, "red" colour. The much too long expectation of a social reform to be enacted by the Provisional Government and the Constituent Assembly prompted the workers to attempt independent socialist projects while the experience of daily struggle taught them political class revolutionary action. A "red" ideological alloy was formed; for its part, it had an increasingly strong influence on the workers. As a result, a specific ideological unity of the working-class movement in Paris took shape, if only for a short time, in the period before June.

As shown by experience, in periods of high tides of the working-class movement, when the revolutionary people turn out in force to the streets, a certain levelling off of the ideological sentiments occurs on a mass scale: the working masses are seized with a common ideological ferment. This was the case, in particular, with Chartism, which in the latter half of the thirties won the sympathies of the working masses and became their ideology in an amazingly short time, although this ideology was an odd mixture of reformist and revolutionary socialist conclusions from Ricardo's political economy, from the theory of human rights, from the ideals of "good old England", and from the daily experience of labour struggle. As a result, in 1842, the workers of England's industrial districts acted as a revolutionary mass more or less homogeneous ideologically. In France, a similar situation took shape in 1848. Of course, not all of the leaders and sects were drawn into the common revolutionary torrent. In England, for instance, William Lovett retained his reformist views and withdrew from the Chartist movement; in France, Proudhon with his appeals for a renunciation of political struggle found himself outside the mass struggle, although his criticism of

the capitalist system had an objectively revolutionary significance at the time.

In many documents of the French workers' societies (corporations, clubs, associations of the workers of the national workshops) the note of social reformism sounded quite audibly even in the last few weeks before the uprising; the workers who were under the influence of Louis Blanc's projects still hoped that they would be able to "organise labour" without destroying the foundation of the existing system but only by improving it. At the same time, the mass of the proletarians in June 1848 was more or less clearly aware that the government in power and the Constituent Assembly were acting as enemies of the working class and for this reason should be dislodged. The spread of this view within the masses had the result that the June uprising was in fact a struggle of the working class for political power in the name of social transformation; it was, if one is to make a crude analogy, a kind of a Chartist movement in France concentrated within a space of four days and having the form of an armed conflict.

Under ordinary, "normal" conditions, social reformism entails a reformist policy; however, the position of the French workers in the period under review was different. Their views and aspirations, which found expression in numerous documents, articles, appeals, and posters, were a peculiar synthesis of social reformism with growing political revolutionary ferment. The workers' sentiments became more and more revolutionary as developments revealed the absolute unwillingness of the bourgeois government to implement what the workers called a social reform, i.e. what would have been a social transformation should it have been carried into effect by the workers themselves.

For all that, relying on its power—which had been demonstrated in the February days—and aware of the absence in Paris of any other force except the armed people who had recently defeated their enemies, the workers hoped until the last moment that the bourgeoisie would yield to their pressure and agree to social reforms within the framework of the existing state. The workers visualised it as a people's state by birthright.

The Provisional Government more than once demonstrated to the workers its obstinacy on the main, cardinal problems. It made only one important concession, proclaiming the "right to work". The government took advantage of a workers' slogan to demonstrate the sincerety of its promises and so set up the national workshops. As long as they existed the workers reconciled themselves to their misery and were waiting for social reforms. Their hopes were nourished by their conviction that the state remained a people's state, and this conviction was in turn based on the existence of the national workshops. Although the latter had nothing in common with a genuine

social reform, they seemed to be its symbol to the workers. Therefore, the state which had closed down the national workshops appeared to them alien, hostile and hateful. Their months of hunger, trust and hopes had all been in vain! The workers realised all this in a matter of hours. Equally disappointed in their hopes, they revolted all to a man. The vast mass of the Parisian proletarians seemed to be directed by an invisible conductor. Of course, their organisations (including the biggest ones—the Society of United Corporations and the Commission of the Central Assembly of the Delegates of the National Workshops) maintained close ties with each other, but these ties alone are not enough to explain the common spirit of the insurgents: it had been called forth by the identity of ideas and a sudden realisation of the ruin of their earlier hopes.

The June uprising was devoid of the optimism and festive atmosphere of the February revolution. The latter had been carried out by the workers in alliance with the "higher classes of society". Under such conditions the old machinery of state retreating before the onslaught of the workers had offered nothing like desperate resistance, because it was a matter of changing the political regime rather than radically transforming the social system.

In June the working class, driven to despair by months of want and unemployment, rose alone. That was an uprising of people who had been disappointed in their hopes and lost patience. The proletarians, and their aspirations towards social liberation were opposed by all classes of bourgeois society. In the specific conditions of 1848 class independence to which the French proletariat had risen was inevitably accompanied by isolation, and the workers knew that they had no allies. At the same time, the machinery of state of the exploiter classes, which had been so pliant in February, now in June, when the class rule of the bourgeois was at stake, displayed implacable determination. The uprising was doomed from the start, and the feeling of doom never left the insurgents.

The common demand of all insurgents was a democratic and social republic. At the same time, they insisted on the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and a Constitution drafted by the people themselves. They proclaimed slogans of "organisation of labour" and "the right to work". What was their real meaning?

To the Parisian workers a democratic and social republic meant in principle what the six points of the Charter had meant to the English workers in 1842, the period when the Chartist movement was at its height. And small wonder. The workers stubbornly attached decisive importance to certain formulas whose true meaning they did not yet comprehend. When in 1842, for instance, the free traders decided to support the demands in two or three clauses of the Charter, the workers rejected their proposal for an alliance on this

basis. What is more, when the followers of the radical free trader Joseph Sturge came forward even with approval of all the six clauses of the Charter, the workers again refused to budge, since the free traders had refused to approve the term "Charter". In this way the Chartist workers drew a line between their own and bourgeois social aspirations. Something like that happened in France in 1848. It would seem that the slogan of a democratic and social republic, which did not yet have a clear, concrete meaning, was merely a name; but the workers, unwilling to abandon it, more and more insistently advanced it to the forefront, while the bourgeoisie was more and more scared of these words. The very name meant a class watershed here.

To the broad masses of the workers the idea of a social republic at first did not yet mean a rupture with "a republic for all", "a democratic republic". However, nothing clears the consciousness of the revolutionary class as much as an open, decisive and relentless class battle. It was precisely in the course of the June uprising that much of what the "social republic" really was became clear to the workers for a short time, for a historical moment. "The social republic is government by the workers," said the workers facing a trial, responding to a question about the goals of the uprising. If the June uprising is likened to something like a Chartist movement concentrated in time, one should note among other things the following essential distinction: in Paris enveloped in the flames of an uprising many workers realised what to the Chartists had been a largely unconscious feeling—they saw in their uprising an action to win political power for the working class. The whole period between February and June may be described as a gigantic process of involving the working population of Paris in political life and of realising the irreconcilability of the proletarian class interests with those of the bourgeoisie. In this process backward groups of workers more and more caught up with the front-ranking ones, the latter in turn forged ahead, and the movement itself continued on a new foundation. The common result of this process was the amazing unity of action of individual groups of the Parisian working people (corporate organisations, political associations, supporters of various democratic clubs) who, driven by a common impulse, formed the united 45,000-strong insurgent army.

Attempts were also made to introduce an element of planned rather than spontaneous organisation into the uprising. For example, the Society of Human Rights joined with the organisations of workers of the national workshops. One of the barricades was under the command of a veteran member of a republican society, another under a leader of one of the clubs which had sprung up after the February revolution, a third under the editor of a workers' newspaper, a fourth

under a veteran of the uprising of 1839. Many of these people had long known one another at least by hearsay; and many had fought side by side on the barricades in February. On the whole, however, the uprising was spontaneous: its guiding impulse was, as shown above, an explosion of the workers' resentment against the bourgeois government, which in the minds of the workers had instantly turned into a hostile force after June 21. This explosive charge of hatred became the great "common denominator"; the vast mass of the workers thought, acted and felt the same, and the tradition of street fighting taught them the common tactics and methods of struggle. Although the workers had a vague idea of "a democratic and social republic", nevertheless, they struggled precisely for the overthrow of the bourgeois government; though identically sounding republican slogans were proclaimed on both sides of the barricades, their contents were, of course, different: a bourgeois republic, on the one hand, and a republic without the bourgeois order, on the other. What is more, the workers sought not only to overthrow the government and dissolve the Constituent Assembly: they sought to create a situation where the people of Paris themselves would accomplish the task of the Assembly—work out a Constitution. A demand for consistent democracy and direct government by the people was advanced in effect. Remembering that these slogans were advanced by armed workers, who in case of their victory would be in control of the capital, one cannot but draw the conclusion that a victory of the June uprising would have meant the conquest of state power by the workers of Paris and an attempt to carry out a social transformation in the interest of the proletariat.

Engels described the distinctive situation that developed in the course of the revolution as follows: "Thanks to the economic and political development of France since 1789, Paris has been placed for the last fifty years in such a position that no revolution could break out there without assuming a poletarian character, that is to say, without the proletariat, which had brought victory with its blood, advancing its own demands after victory. These demands were more or less unclear and even confused, corresponding to the state of development reached by the workers of Paris at the particular period, but in the last resort they all amounted to the abolition of the class antagonism between capitalists and workers. It is true that no one knew how this was to be brought about. But the demand itself, however indefinitely it still was couched, contained a threat to the existing order of society; the workers who put it forward were still armed; therefore, the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois, who were at the helm of the state. Hence, after every revolution won by the workers, a new struggle, ending with the defeat of the workers.

"This happened for the first time in 1848."[1]

The social aims of the uprising did not escape the attention of the bourgeoisie. In his appeal to the National Guard on June 24, 1848, Sénard wrote of the "communist formulas" proclaimed by the barricade defenders. They did not demand a republic, because it had been proclaimed; they did not demand universal suffrage, because it had been enacted, he wrote; consequently they "want anarchy, fires, plunder", Sénard concluded, identifying the socialisation of private property with pillage.[2] Similar notes sounded in the July message of the Mayor of Paris, Marrast to the mayors of the Parisian districts. He wrote in particular: "Let the National Guard, which is the chief guardian of public order and *property*, understand that *its interests*, *its credit*, its honour are at stake. If it shows weakness, it will leave the whole fatherland to the mercy of fate, and *expose the family and property to the most horrendous calamities.*"[3]

In other words, for all the uncertainty of the workers' social aspirations, for all the vagueness of the formulas in which they were worded, these aspirations were with full reason interpreted by the bourgeois, the shopowners, the rentiers, the landowners and other propertied classes as an encroachment on the foundation of foundations of the existing system—private property—and were denoted by the word "communism". Hence the unusually clear-cut class differentiation in June 1848.

Besides the conclusion on the need for political independence, the workers of Paris hit on another idea whose spread in their midst played an exceptionally important part in the further development of the French working-class movement. Many of them realised that petty-bourgeois and peasant provinces would not support the Parisian proletarians in the struggle for social progress. Consequently, universal suffrage in itself could not become a weapon of the proletariat but would only result in the subordination of Paris to the rest of France. From this followed two other conclusions: it was a matter of first priority for the workers to achieve supremacy in Paris—hence, it was necessary to win control of the Paris municipality; universal suffrage would not secure for the working class the key positions even in Paris if it was not reinforced with general armament of the people, with direct interference of the armed workers in the administration of state, direct government by the people. In other words, some central ideas, which later guided the Communards of

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 179-80.

[2] Quoted in Daniel Stern, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848*, pp. 337-38.

[3] Quoted in P.-J. Proudhon, *Les confessions d'un révolutionnaire*, Garnier frères librairies, Paris, 1850, p. 120.

1871, first arose in the midst of the workers during the revolution of 1848.

The defeat of the Parisian proletariat in June 1848 meant also a defeat for the bourgeois republic. The bourgeois also learned a lesson in the June fighting: the republican form of government opened much too broad a scope for the workers' activities. "Quiet slavery, even under the rule of a little too stern a master," said a bourgeois newspaper of that time, "scares these people less than the terrible blood-stained liberty that appeared to them on the barricades, brandishing its red banner; and tomorrow they would sooner submit to the power of the tzar or the Turkish sultan than to the power of a democratic and social republic."[1]

Covert monarchists began to play an ever greater part in the government of the bourgeois Republicans. Louis Blanc and Caussidière, who were to face prosecution, emigrated to England. The influence of the "party of order"—a coalition of monarchist groups, which had been operating under the republican banner for the time being—on the course of political developments was continually growing.

The workers were actually deprived of the right to association and to strike. The government abrogated the decree on the limitation of the working day. Any attempt of the left-wing deputies of the Constituent Assembly to justify the June uprising was followed by their frantic baiting. In November 1848 the Constituent Assembly approved a draft Constitution which vested broad powers in the President of the Republic. The presidential elections held on December 10 were won by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. The big bourgeoisie sought his support, as the most dependable guardian of law and order. He also got the vote of the masses of peasants who hoped that the nephew of the great Napoleon would deliver them from the burden of taxes imposed by the republic and the oppression of the bourgeois city. Cavaignac's candidacy was defeated. The advancing counter-revolution swept the bourgeois Republicans aside. The general who had "defended" the republic against the workers in June, was no longer acceptable to the bourgeoisie: he was a Republican. For their part, the workers regarded the republic and its symbol, Cavaignac, with hatred and contempt: they had deceived and then massacred their comrades.

Early in 1849, the petty-bourgeois democrats rose against the bourgeois government and the Assembly whose monarchist visage was more and more obvious. The most prominent figure among them was Alexandre-Auguste Ledru-Rollin. They attempted to enlist the support of the workers by including in their programme certain ideas

[1] *Lettres à M. le général Cavaignac, par F. C. de Damery*, Paris, 21 July, 1848. From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

of Utopian socialism. However, the working people of Paris, defeated and drained of blood, could no longer rise for a determined action. The workers' associations united in the Syndical Chamber of Labour increasingly inclined towards Proudhonism, which denied in principle the effectiveness of any political action. On June 13, 1849, a month after the elections to the Legislative Assembly won by the "party of order", the petty-bourgeois democrats held a peaceful demonstration of protest against the government's decision to send troops to Rome to suppress a popular movement. After the demonstration had been dispersed, they called on the masses to take up arms. Isolated pockets of resistance organised by the workers, however, were easily stamped out. According to Marx, "June 1849 was the Nemesis of June 1848. In June 1849, it was not the workers that were vanquished; it was the petty bourgeois, who stood between them and the revolution, that were felled."[1]

* * *

The entire history of the revolution in France which began in February 1848 clearly falls into two periods: those before and after the June uprising. Before June the class which has overthrown the monarchy became increasingly revolutionised and acted more and more independently. The ruling classes and their bodies of government—the Provisional Government and later the Constituent Assembly—had a very hard time holding back this rapidly mounting pressure of the Parisian workers. The revolution was then marking time in the sense that the bourgeois republic, while caving in under the pressure of the masses, refused to make concessions to them on the main social issues. In that situation the class forces became increasingly polarised. Both sides were losing their illusions and preparing for a showdown. In June the bourgeois got the upper hand and thereby defeated the Revolution of 1848 as a whole. Having stabbed the proletarian heart of the revolution the bourgeoisie killed it. The June uprising was followed by a counter-revolutionary period, because the class which had carried out the revolution had suffered a devastating defeat, while the other classes of society had no interest not only in a social but even in a radical political transformation.

Describing the positions of the bourgeoisie and its repressive machinery in 1848, Lenin wrote: "...General Cavaignac ... decided to *disarm* the Paris workers and shoot them down *en masse*.

"The revolution ended in that historic shooting. The petty bourgeoisie, while numerically superior, had been and remained the politi-

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 100.

cally impotent tail of the bourgeoisie, and three years later France saw the restoration of a particularly vile form of Caesarist monarchy."[1]

The most outstanding "figures" of the revolution of 1848 bore a grotesque likeness to the great revolutionaries of the late 18th century. This was attributable not only to the personal qualities of the "heroes of 1848"—their merits were a very light baggage indeed. Why did the bourgeois revolution of 1848 "choose" phrase-mongers as its heroes? Because the bourgeois class which had advanced them was changed. Having rushed into the wide breach the revolution of the late 18th century had made in the "old regime", this class had already gained much of what it had struggled for in the revolutionary years; it had become rich, philistine, and cowardly; least of all did it want to act like a magician who has conjured up by his spells the powers of the nether world he is unable to control. The bourgeois class was scared of the popular revolution which had been in progress in France since February—a revolution in which the proletariat was the prime mover. The influence of the bourgeoisie on the course of developments determined by its material possibilities, position in the state apparatus, education and habits of political activity, the capacity of its different sections for concerted action had been dealt a blow, but it still remained decisive. The bourgeoisie had no need, therefore, to advance to the forefront persons who wanted to widen and deepen the revolution. As a result, people unwilling, in fact, to do what they loudly proclaimed found themselves in the foreground; and they had to proclaim (for instance, their intention to carry the revolution to completion, to implement sweeping social reforms) primarily because a powerful force—the working people, the proletariat first and foremost—would have immediately come out against them, should they have been silent or proclaimed to the contrary. The more obvious the power of that force, the more clearly the bourgeoisie realised the need to check the people's spontaneous movement getting out of control; the means used to this end were phrases—precisely such phrases for that matter that had been followed by great deeds in the past. Lamartine, Marrast, Ledru-Rollin, Louis Blanc did not wish to translate into practice what they were advocating in words. The heroes of the phrase in 1848 were distributed according to the places the heroes of action had occupied in 1789-1794. Hence the impression—linked with the discrepancy between speeches and actions—of the grandiose farce of 1848 which parodied the tragedy of 1793. While acknowledging this circumstance, however, it should be re-emphasised that the bourgeois farce of 1848

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The Class Origins of Present-Day and 'Future' Cavaignacs", *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, Vol. 25, p. 94.

until some time only eclipsed the great proletarian tragedy whose formidable and sombre outlines distinctly appeared on the historical scene during the June uprising.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ABSOLUTISM AND REACTION, FOR DEMOCRACY

THE PROLETARIAT AND THE REVOLUTIONARY OUTBREAK IN GERMANY

In the German states the proletariat was developed and united much less than in France or Britain. The mass of the German workers did not yet show any radical socio-political aspirations characteristic of the French proletarians at that time. They had neither corresponding traditions or experience of determined political action.

Nevertheless, the German proletariat proved an important force in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.[1] Its primary tasks were the eradication of feudal survivals and the unification of Germany on a democratic foundation. The feudal survivals had been uprooted only in the states and territories west of the Rhine. In that part of the country an industrial revolution had started, and the bourgeoisie began to grow and gain strength. There, however, just as anywhere in Germany, important economic and key political positions were held by the wealthy landowners; the tools of their domination were the monarchist regimes surviving in all 38 German states. In that situation the objective task facing the revolution was to bring the country's political superstructure into line with the changing economic basis, to give free scope to the development of capitalist relations of production.

The workers of the German states were interested in a triumph of a bourgeois-democratic system and in the abolition of political fragmentation. Within the framework of a united state a relatively favourable situation would take shape for organising the working class and a struggle against the bourgeoisie. In exactly the same way the proletariat was objectively interested in the most complete and consistent eradication of the feudal survivals in the countryside; the development of capitalism in agriculture after the Prussian fashion

[1] For more detailed information about the revolution of 1848 in Germany and the workers' involvement in it see: *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, Bd. 1, Von den Anfängen der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung bis zum Ausgang des 19. Jahrhunderts, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1966, pp. 85-168. See also: Karl Obermann, *Die deutschen Arbeiter in der Revolution von 1848*, Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1953. For a review of studies on this problem by Marxist historians of the GDR see: S. B. Kahn, *German Historiography of the Revolution of 1848-1849 in Germany*, Moscow, 1962, p. 244 *et seq.* (in Russian).

(dooming the peasants to misery and fettering dependence on the wealthy landowners) already incipient in the earlier half of the 19th century retarded the development of the proletariat itself and, consequently, limited the scale of its movement. The decisive victory for a democratic revolution in the German states would have meant, in addition, the national liberation of the peoples oppressed by Prussia and Austria, the establishment of new and independent bourgeois states, a weakening of the power of the Holy Alliance—the bastion of the absolutist regimes in Europe. Nevertheless, in 1848-1849 the workers of the German kingdoms and principalities were still incapable of independent political action.

The most influential political force of the revolution in Germany was the industrial and trade bourgeoisie. At the same time the existence and struggle of the proletariat, whose most progressive members had already expressed at an earlier time their willingness and ability to come out against the bourgeoisie, restrained the latter in its struggle against absolutism. The indecision, vacillations, and grovelling of the German bourgeoisie before the monarchy and the aristocracy were largely due to its fear of the proletariat. However, another circumstance was also of great importance: the German working class was yet unable to prod its own bourgeoisie to revolutionary actions as it had happened in France. What is more, whole generations of German bourgeois had gone through a historical school of philistinism, servility, political and spiritual subjugation to the feudal aristocracy and the bureaucracy. Hence the special predilection of the German bourgeoisie for a compromise deal with them.

One of the major motive forces of the German revolution of 1848-1849 was the petty bourgeoisie: the craftsmen, small traders, the owners of small enterprises. However, the petty-bourgeois democrats in Germany in the late 1840s by no means had the determination, consistency and courage of their French forerunners of the revolutionary period of the late 18th century. The reason was rooted primarily in the guarded attitude of the petty bourgeoisie to the working class and its movement, as well as in its economic dependence of the aristocracy, the court, the garrisons of the monarchic armies, in the traditional narrow world outlook of small proprietors who rarely gave thought to what was taking place outside the possessions of their sovereigns.

The revolution in Germany began in the south-western and southern states. On February 27, in Mannheim, Baden, a large meeting of townspeople—workers, craftsmen, journeymen, apprentices, merchants, intellectuals—advanced demands for armament of the people, for guaranteed freedom of the press, the institution of trial by jury, and the convening of a national parliament (known as the March demands). The movement under these slogans was soon joined

by liberal bourgeois, craftsmen, merchants, and wage labourers of several cities in southern and south-western Germany. On March 2, the working people revolted in Munich. The workers, apprentices and craftsmen seized the local arsenal by storm, armed themselves and forced regular troops to retreat. In the south and south-west of the country the movement spread to the rural areas: the peasants rose in arms against their feudal obligations, and burned down documents in which they were written. The monarchs of Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse, Kurhessen, Nassau and other states were compelled to make concessions and meet at least some of the March demands. Power was vested in liberal bourgeois ministries, censorship was limited or abolished, freedom of assembly was proclaimed.

The last German state reached by the tide of revolution was Prussia. On March 3, 1848 the Communist League organised in Cologne a demonstration of 5,000 workers and craftsmen. A few days before, members of the Communist League had held secret meetings discussing a programme for future action. The demands of the Communists were formulated in six points: handover of the legislative and executive powers to the people; universal suffrage; replacement of a regular army with universal armament of the people; the right of assembly; guaranteed protection of labour and satisfaction of "the human requirements for all"; education of children at state expense. At the same time, in the Town Hall of Cologne "the city fathers" drew up a petition to the Prussian government, which was worded in much more moderate terms and answered the interests of only the well-to-do burghers. With its aid the bourgeois of the Cologne municipal council hoped to tame the working-class movement in the city. This attempt proved to no avail. The municipal council was still in session when a crowd of 5,000 people (mostly workers) flooded the square in front of the Town Hall. The Communists circulated leaflets presenting their demands. The demonstrators sent to the Town Hall a delegation led by the physician Andreas Gottschalk, a member of a Cologne commune of the Communist League. He handed in the petition to the Ober-Burgomaster and declared that the municipal council should draw up an appeal to the government in the spirit of the people's demands. Aware of the workers' determination, the liberal bourgeois forwarded to the government's plenipotentiary in Rhine Province two petitions simultaneously: the one from the demonstrators and their own.

Expecting disturbances in the city, the police and military authorities of Cologne placed the garrison and the police force on the alert in the morning. An infantry battalion was ordered to disperse the demonstrators; when troops marched into the square, part of the crowd burst into the Town Hall. The scared council members took to their heels. Before long, however, troops drove the workers out of the

Town Hall. Gottschalk, as well as August Willich and Friedrich Anneke (the Communists who had spoken to the crowd in front of the Town Hall) were arrested. On learning of their detention the workers started to assemble in the Town Hall square again. It was not until nightfall that troops finally succeeded in dispersing the demonstrators.

That was the first massive workers' demonstration in Germany after the advent of the revolution. For the first time the proletariat at a large city came out as an independent revolutionary democratic force which had taken a determined stance in the developing revolution. Under the pressure of the proletarians the Cologne municipal council requested the government's plenipotentiary to submit to Berlin a proposal for an early convening of a united landtag. In this way the Cologne bourgeoisie intended to side-step the demand for universal suffrage advanced by the workers. The latter proposed the calling of a National Assembly representing the whole nation. The provincial landtags were assemblies of representatives from the estates, with deliberative powers, and their combination in a united landtag did not amount to any essential change in the Prussian state system.

The events on March 3 sparked off a series of meetings in large cities: Aachen, Düsseldorf, Elberfeld, Coblenz. The demand for constitutional reforms was proclaimed everywhere. Soon this movement spread throughout Prussia's Rhine Province.

King Friedrich-Wilhelm IV decided to oppose the growing popular movement with "determination and inexorability". On March 9, he appointed Prince Wilhelm military governor of Rhine Province vested with emergency powers. The latter, however, was left no time to take office: the revolutionary movement had already extended to the Prussian capital Berlin. The city had 400,000 residents, of whom 70,000 were workers, journeymen and apprentices, and craftsmen.

Since March 6 workers, craftsmen, students, and shop-keepers had assembled every day in the area of Tiergarten, a favourite recreation park of Berliners. On March 7 one of such meetings resolved to address a petition to the authorities, requesting the government's consent to armament of the people and insisting on an early convening of a united landtag and the establishment of national assembly of people's representatives.

In the meantime, news of revolutionary demonstrations in large cities of Prussia (Cologne, Breslau, Königsberg) reached Berlin. The news added to the resentment of the Berliners. Public meetings in Tiergarten grew larger with every passing day. On March 9 a crowd of 4,000 assembled there. They requested assistance from the Berlin municipal council in submitting a petition to the King. There was a

repetition of what had happened in Cologne earlier: the liberal bourgeois addressed the government with their own petition of a much less radical content, asking for no more than calling a united landtag. The King, however, refused to receive their deputation. He had strong faith in the power of his armed forces, especially the Guards. Moreover, early in March the King had agreed with the Chancellor of the Austrian Empire, Metternich, to hold on March 25 a counsel of German princes in Dresden to discuss the possibility of minor reforms.

On March 6, the Prussian government promised regularly to convene the united landtag, on March 8, to abolish censorship. The government made small concessions, confining itself mainly to promises (in order to gain time and muster forces).

It was a hard time for the Berlin workers. Unemployment was growing steadily. In the early days of that month alone about 400 workers of Borsig's engineering factory lost their jobs and means of subsistance. On March 13, the people's direct confrontation with troops began. On that day, 10,000 people, including many workers, assembled in Tiergarten. Again and again they proposed a petition to the King. Following the example of their French counterparts the Berlin workers demanded the institution of a "Ministry of Labour". The content of their demand, however, was different: it contained no idea of a social transformation. Whereas the French proletarians had appealed to a republican government set up after their victory in barricade fighting the Prussian workers had to deal with their "all-merciful" King.

The French and the German workers had different attitude to their "own" bourgeoisie and differently interpreted the tasks of the revolution. In France the insurgent workers had sought to do away with the monarchy and transform the social system in their own interests. The German workers, however, sought to put an end to the sway of the landed nobility, the bureaucratic regimes and the political fragmentation of the country in the hope that this would lead to an improvement in their economic position. Their current economic demands were not yet subordinated to wider social goals.

The reactionary military tried to provoke an armed conflict so as to nip the popular movement in the bud. Large troop contingents were concentrated around the royal palace and the Arsenal. Artillery was moved into position of the strategic points in the city, which was patrolled by cavalry round the clock.

Berlin workers going home from a meeting in Tiergarten were attacked by regular troops. The workers fought back with cobblestones dug up from pavements and iron bars torn off from fencings and attempted to build barricades.

In the next few days troops repeatedly attacked unarmed crowds.

Before March 17 at least 20 demonstrators were killed and 150 wounded. This aroused indignation among the Berliners. On March 15 news of a popular uprising in Vienna reached the city. On the same day, the Berlin workers' petition to the King drawn up early in March was made public. It read:

"Your All-Merciful Majesty! At this time of extreme hardship and bitterness we have experienced for a number of years we workers of all trades beg to address your Majesty with the following humble request. We plead with Your Majesty for our speedy deliverance from our present misery and unemployment and for guarantees of our future. The state can develop and prosper only where the people can satisfy their vital needs with their labours and present their grievances; we are human beings endowed with feelings. We are oppressed by the capitalists and the usurers; the laws now in force cannot protect us against them. Therefore, we as your loyal subjects beg to request Your Majesty to appoint a Ministry of Labour—staffed with employers and workers alone—whose members may be elected only from their midst."[1]

The workers and the burghers insistently demanded that troops be pulled out of Berlin. On March 16, troops guarding the palace of the Prince of Prussia opened fire on a crowd. A few people were killed. Large and small groups of workers continued to gather here and there; they were joined by burghers. The demand for an immediate troop withdrawal from Berlin was on everybody's lips. On March 17, meetings held in different parts of the city openly discussed the question of how to force the reactionary cabinet to resign and achieve armament of the people. A plan was suggested for addressing a petition to the King for the withdrawal of troops from the city, for organising an armed militia, for guaranteed freedom of the press and for an immediate convening of a united landtag. A delegation from Rhine Province visited the King and informed him that his inflexible stance threatened secession of the province from Prussia. The delegates requested the King to agree to reforms.

The King already knew of the revolutionary events in Vienna and Metternich's flight. At noon on March 18 two royal decrees were promulgated: one abolished censorship, the other appointed the first session of a united landtag for April 2. In the meantime, the agitation in the city reached its climax. An enormous crowd assembled in front of the palace. Friedrich-Wilhelm IV appeared on the balcony, and both decrees were read out to the people.

Yet there was no order on withdrawal of troops from the capital, and this aroused general indignation. There were calls: "Down with

[1] Quoted in Karl Obermann, *Die deutschen Arbeiter in der Revolution von 1848*, p. 122.

soldiers! Down with the military!" This slogan became the main demand of the working people of Berlin. In the daytime on March 18 the King was not yet prepared to concede it. The crowd refused to leave the square. Cavalry was ordered to disperse it. A squadron of dragoons galloped into the square out of the palace gates; two infantry companies followed them. The troops opened fire. The people continually provoked by the military lost their patience. An armed struggle began.

Thousands of people driven off the palace square by the dragoons escaped into the neighbouring streets, burst into arms shops and seized weapons; many sped to their homes only to return armed with axes and knives. The ring of a tocsin resounded over the city. Within three hours about a thousand barricades were erected. Hoisted over them were tricolour banners symbolising the people's aspiration towards national unity. At 3 p.m. troops were ordered to suppress the uprising. Fierce barricade fighting ensued.

Before midnight troops attempted to seize the main streets and squares in the central quarter of the city. The insurgents were heavily outnumbered. The Commander of the Royal Guard, General Karl von Prittwitz, had 14,000 infantrymen and cavalrymen and 36 cannon at his disposal, while the core of the insurgent forces consisted of only 3,000-4,000 men. However, they were supported by scores of thousands of Berliners, who built barricades, supplied arms, ammunition and food and took care of the wounded. Already at night the insurgents were in control of the greater part of the city. There were first signs of disobedience among the soldiers; at places infantrymen refused to shoot at the people; officers were apprehensive lest they fraternise with the people.

The King's appeal "To My Beloved Berliners!" calling on them to "let bygones be bygones" and lay down their arms had no effect. The insurgents tore it off the house walls.

In the morning of March 19, fighting resumed with renewed intensity. Finally, the King beat a retreat: he announced his order to troops to pull out of the city. The people of Berlin emerged victorious from the bloody battle of 16 hours. They paid a dear price for their victory, however. About 230 insurgents were killed. A survey of the lists of the dead shows that the vast majority of them were proletarians: of the 183 identified and buried fighters of the March uprising at least 89-90 per cent were apprentices, craftsmen, and factory hands. At noon the King was compelled to pay honour to the victims. Their bodies were brought to the palace. Friedrich-Wilhelm IV had to bow to the fallen workers. Scared of the wrath of the people, the Prince of Prussia fled to England.

On the same day, March 19, the King consented to arming the burghers and ordered the resignation of the government hated by the

people. Within a few days Ludolf Camphausen, a representative of the liberal bourgeoisie, was appointed premier. The insurgent people achieved some democratic rights; in fact, they won the right to association, and part of the workers armed themselves.

No sooner had they got access to the government than the liberals representing the interests of the big bourgeoisie betrayed the revolution. Their goal was not the overthrow of the monarchy but a mutually beneficial compromise deal with it. The Prussian National Assembly elected early in May adhered to the same position. The government that had been installed in power by the revolution opposed the revolution. Its chief concern was to hold back and then to suppress the democratic forces of the nation, relying on the reactionary machinery of state. Since the petty-bourgeois democrats enjoyed limited support at the time, the people who had won victory were left without leadership. After March 18, the revolution in Prussia was on the downgrade. This largely determined the fate of revolution in other German states.

The events of March 18, however, were crucial to the political education of the German proletariat. Unlike the proletarians of Paris and Lyons, the workers of the Prussian capital had no experience of revolutionary struggle against the monarchy, and even felt traditional respect for the monarchic institutions. They were on the whole unorganised. Nevertheless, on March 18 the proletarian population of Berlin gave battle to the King's army and forced it to retreat. The dream of the early proletarian revolutionaries came true: of all the strata and classes of German society the workers were the first to overcome the spirit of obedience and philistinism and to challenge what had been sanctified by centuries. That was a great historic service of the Berlin proletarians to the German and international working-class movement, to the German people as a whole. True, members of the bourgeois classes could also be seen on the barricades in March, but more often than not they assisted the fighters, supplying them with arms and shelter, rather than taking a direct part in fighting.

On the ideological plane, the main distinction between the Berlin workers in the "post-March" period and the "post-February" working population of Paris was the fact that the French workers, who already had the experience of class struggle against the bourgeoisie, quickly abandoned their illusions and their faith in "universal brotherhood" despite all the demagogic devices of the Provisional Government. The German proletarians, however, who had not yet learned to mistrust the bourgeoisie, did not suspect, as a rule, that the latter was using the workers in its own, narrow and selfish, class interests. Another circumstance was also important. After the February Revolution the people of Paris not only preserved their arms but also supplement-

ed their stocks (any adult citizen was eligible to join the National Guard and thus get the right to bear arms). In Prussia, on the other hand, only a bourgeois militia was formed, and the March events were immediately followed by disarmament of the workers.

For all that, in one very important respect, the Prussian workers in March achieved success similar to that gained by the people of Paris: they won the right to association *de facto*.

After the March victory in Prussia, where the destiny of the revolution was largely decided on an all-German scale, a relative balance of power was temporarily established between the struggling classes. The revolution awakened enormous masses of workers to political life. The workers of large-scale industry were especially active. The political awareness of the workers in the Prussian capital is illustrated by an appeal to Berliners from all engineering workers issued on April 17: "Citizens of Berlin! It is four weeks since the day that brought us freedom. What is new that the government has done over the period? As a matter of fact, nothing!" The workers declared that the trust they had vested in the ministers was more and more giving way to mistrust, "because Herr Camphausen ... has frankly declared that the present government will stand for indirect (two-staged.—*Auth.*) elections to the end". The appeal urged the people to be vigilant. Addressing the burghers, its authors pointed out that the powers that be were seeking to oppose the burghers to the workers and in this way to preserve their own positions. "We can see the grave being dug in advance for both of us—the burgher and the worker." The appeal said further: "Our present plight is terrible. ...We wish to be really free, because only in this can one seek improvement in the position of all. You and we, in short, the people must assure a better position for ourselves by our own efforts rather than rely on the servants of the state. This is the way the workers think and feel!" The workers rebuked the burghers for their worship of "mammon—your property". However, the burghers had nothing to fear: nobody was going to rob them. Referring to the burghers' fear of the workers, they remarked that if it had not been for this fear, the burghers would not have needed guards and patrols in such enormous numbers. "Give us weapons," demanded the workers, "we want to join with you in safeguarding law and order...." The appeal ended in a meaningful statement: "Most of us have been soldiers, we can act forcefully and energetically as was evidenced by the battle on that fatal night of March 18."[1]

---

[1] "Aufruf sämtlicher Maschinenbau-Arbeiter an die Bürger Berlins!" Quoted in Karl Obermann, *Flugblätter der Revolution. Eine Flugblattsammlung zur Geschichte der Revolution von 1848/49 in Deutschland*, VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin, 1970, S. 204, 204-05, 206, 207.

Thus, forward-looking Berlin workers realised that the monarchy was determined to suppress the popular movement, taking advantage of the fear of the bourgeoisie for its property. However, they were yet unaware of how quickly the bourgeoisie defects to the counter-revolutionary camp. At any event, this process did not seem irreversible to them; they wanted to check it, and to prod the bourgeoisie to revolutionary actions.

The political struggle in Prussia after the March revolution focussed on the elections to the National Assembly. The workers went to the polls, although the electoral system imposed upon them was the one they had protested against.

The Prussian National Assembly opened in Berlin on May 22. Four days earlier the all-German National Assembly had gone into session in Frankfort. In both parliaments, the Prussian and the all-German, the majority of the deputies were moderate bourgeois liberals inclined towards an alliance with reaction. The Frankfort Assembly did not wish to become the revolutionary centre of a united Germany. It preferred fruitless negotiations with the princes and soon turned into a talking-shop devoid of any prestige and even a semblance of authority. For its part, the Prussian National Assembly began its deliberations with a refusal to express its gratitude to the fighters of the March revolution; called into being by the revolution, the Assembly virtually denounced it.

In the meantime, the Berlin workers were persistently demanding armament of the people. As a result of the March revolution, in Prussia, just as in many other German states, only bourgeois volunteers were allowed to enlist in militia. Thus, the formation of militia was not equivalent to armament of the people. What is more, the government expected, not without reason, to use the militia against the workers. In June the most radical democrats in Frankfort, Königsberg and Berlin came forward with a demand for arming the workers.

On June 14 in Berlin workers and craftsmen clashed with police and the bourgeois militia near the Brandenburg Gates and on Palace Square. In the afternoon a large crowd of workers gathered in front of the Arsenal. The meeting proclaimed the slogan of universal armament of the people. The Arsenal was guarded by troops: a regular infantry unit and a detachment of militia. They were unable to hold back the pressure of the crowd. At about 8 p.m. the commander of the militia, fearing an intrusion of the workers into the Arsenal, ordered a general roll-call. While a tocsin rang over the city calling militiamen to their stations fighting flared up in front of the entrance to the Arsenal. The militia opened fire on the crowd of workers; the latter responded with a hail of stones. Two workers were killed and two were severely wounded. At first the crowd dispersed but after a while began to gather again. A leaflet circulated in Berlin, evidently

written by a worker, read: "People stained their hands and white handkerchiefs with the blood of the dead. Soon one of such handkerchiefs was flying over a street as an ominous signal."[1] News of the incident spread through the proletarian districts of Berlin. Late at night, a crowd of workers lighting their way with torches broke into the Arsenal. The authorities, however, had no reason to fear a repetition of the events of March 18: the workers had no definite plan of action. Part of those who had seized weapons were immediately disarmed by bourgeois and students, whereupon the militiamen drove the workers out of the building.

The events of June 14, 1848 were an important landmark in the history of the revolution. The Berlin workers who in March had felt support from other classes and sections of the population opposed to the monarchy (burghers, students, petty bourgeois) now found themselves in isolation. "Blood has been shed," said the above-mentioned leaflet. "The burghers fired at the people. Where is your unity, the people and the burghers? There is only one salvation for our freedom: the unity of all the people of Berlin based on determination, presence of mind, and courage against the enemies of freedom...."[2] After the workers had been abandoned by the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats, reaction became much more confident. On the pretext of defence of the Arsenal the court clique moved troops into Berlin. It felt no need in Camphausen's government any longer. It resigned on June 20. Successive governments of Prussia became more and more reactionary. Gradually the power was vested in direct stooges of the royal court.

Thus, the storming of the Arsenal in Berlin on June 14 entailed an open armed action of the bourgeoisie against the workers. Although they had fought side by side in March 1848, now they found themselves on the different sides of the barricades. In contrast to the Parisian proletarians the Berlin workers had not yet realised the irreconcilability of their own contradictions with the bourgeoisie. They preserved their illusions of the common interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the struggle against the reactionary aristocracy. Although the bourgeoisie went over to the side of the monarchy the realisation of this fact by the workers was obscured by the constitutional forms assumed by that time by the government they had fought jointly with the bourgeoisie in March.

In view of this the mass of the politically active workers of the German states deemed it possible to struggle under the slogan of "a democratic monarchy", regarding the latter as an expression of the

[1] "Berlin am 14. und 15. Juni 1848. Die neuesten Unruhen und ihre Folgen". Quoted in Karl Obermann, *Flugblätter der Revolution*, S. 277. From the repository of the IML, Moscow.

[2] Ibid., p. 275.

sovereignty of the people and government of the people. This slogan which had been upheld by the Berlin workers storming the Arsenal on June 14 opposed them, in effect, to the existing monarchy, as well as to the liberal bourgeoisie supporting it.

After the June events the liberal bourgeoisie and the monarchist reactionaries became even closer allies: indeed, coming out as the vanguard force of democracy, the German proletariat at the same time more and more vigorously defended its specific class interests. As far back as the middle of March Solingen workers had risen in support of their demand for ending payment in kind for their work. Serious labour disturbances flared up in Elberfeld, Kassel, and in the environs of Mainz. Rioting workers sometimes demolished machinery. At the end of March spontaneous demonstrations of starving workers took place in Berlin.

Until 1848 the German workers had rarely gone on strike. As the revolution developed, however, strike struggles assumed a massive scale. They began late in March and lasted until June 1848. The biggest strikes were in evidence in large cities: Berlin, Breslau, Frankfort, Hamburg, Cologne, Munich. The strikers demanded higher wages and legislation to shorten the working day to eight hours.

In the early months of the revolution various trades associations were founded, which were especially numerous in the provinces east of the Elbe, in Saxony and in the central German states. All-Germany trades associations also appeared. In June 1848 printing shopworkers assembled for a congress in Mainz founded an all-Germany printers' association, which, it is true, proved short-lived. In late August and early September 1848 the cigar workers also founded an association on a nationwide scale.

In addition to trades associations, workers' political leagues sprang up in many cities (Berlin, Breslau, Chemnitz, Dresden, Düsseldorf, Frankfort, Hamburg, Hannover, Cologne, Königsberg, Mainz, Leipzig). They represented, as a rule, the most consistent, revolutionary wing of the democratic movement. The leagues maintained ties with petty-bourgeois organisations and were under the influence of their leaders.

THE PROGRAMME, STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF MARX AND ENGELS IN THE REVOLUTION. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

The programme and strategic and tactical principles formulated by Marx and Engels in the revolution of 1848 in Germany are an inalienable part of their conclusions and generalisations concerning the laws of the revolutionary process on an international scale and following from their materialistic interpretation of history. Marx

and Engels foresaw that the revolution imminent in Europe would not yet be a socialist but a bourgeois-democratic revolution. In such a situation, they pointed out, the workers must, acting as the vanguard of the revolution and waging struggle against the "enemies of their enemies", form an independent political force so as to lend the revolution the most determined and consistent character, and then implement a socialist revolution under their own leadership. This is what determined the character of the programme and political aims and means Marx and Engels offered the workers of Germany, a country where they played the role of both theoreticians of revolution and leaders of proletarian political organisations.[1]

The basis for the programme, strategy and tactics of the Communists was furnished by the "Demands of the Communist Party in Germany" written by Marx and Engels as far back as late March 1848. They clearly outlined the goals of the German workers in the developing revolution. Some of the demands were as follows: proclamation of Germany as a united and indivisible republic; institution of universal suffrage; maintenance of people's representatives to enable workers to sit in parliament; universal armament of the people; legal procedure free of charge; abolition of feudal obligations without compensation; nationalisation of the land possessions of the monarchs, as well as landed estates, mines, and means of transportation; conversion of mortgaged peasant land to state property; payment of rent in the form of state tax; institution of the state bank; complete separation of Church and State; limitation of the right of inheritance; introduction of steeply graduated taxes; state guarantees of means of subsistence to *all* workers; universal and free public education.[2]

"Demands of the Communist Party in Germany" were of immense historical significance: they were the first practical platform of national and class demands in the history of the international working-class movement, in it the workers were presented as a class interested more than any other class in radical bourgeois-democratic reforms. "Demands of the Communist Party in Germany" were the programme of the proletarian vanguard of a nation waging struggle for its liberation from the survivals of feudalism and for a united state. In conclusion of the document its authors defined the motive forces of the German revolution: these were the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie, and the small farmers. Marx and Engels proceeded from the assumption that as a result of the revolution the working people must gain their rights and win "that power to which they are entitled as

[1] For greater detail see: S. Z. Leviova, *Marx in the German Revolution of 1848-1849*, Moscow, 1970 (in Russian).

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 3-7.

the producers of all wealth".[1] The total of measures outlined in "Demands of the Communist Party in Germany", if implemented consistently, would mean the extension of the revolution beyond its bourgeois-democratic framework.

One of the most important conclusions to be drawn from the content of this document was as follows: the true victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany can be won only by establishing dictatorship of the people, a revolutionary democratic dictatorship. As Lenin indicated later, Marx and Engels advanced and consistently advocated this idea. It is also indisputable that implementing some of their demands would have involved a deep intrusion into the relations of property.

Early in April 1848 Marx, Engels and other leaders of the Communist League returned to Germany. Marx and Engels settled in the industrial city of Cologne with a large population of workers and a few communes of the Communist League. One of them operated under the guidance of Roland Daniels, Heinrich Bürgers, and D'Ester, who maintained direct ties with Marx and Engels. Another was led by Gottschalk and was influenced by the ideas of "true socialism".

Marx and Engels intended to unite on an independent political foundation the workers' unions which had sprung up in many parts of Germany. An important role in implementing this plan was assigned to the Communist League, which, in Marx's conception, was to provide guidance for an all-Germany class organisation of the proletariat. In April and May the Communist League's Central Committee elected in Paris sent its emissaries (Ernst Dronke, Wilhelm Wolff, Georg Weerth, and Karl Schapper among them) to Germany. They visited many cities with intent to set up new or strengthen existing communes (in Mainz, Coblenz, Cologne, Berlin, Hannover, Wiesbaden, Frankfort-on-the Main, Kassel). However, the influence of the League's small communes, which were few and far between in different German states, on the working masses yet unaware of their class goals and interests, remained insignificant.

The immaturity and disunity of the German proletariat were the chief reasons why the efforts to found a mass political organisation of the working class on an all-German scale failed at that time. Nevertheless, the activities of the League in the revolutionary months of 1848 set the stage for the process of political association of the German workers on a class foundation.

Relying on the communes of the Communist League and on its individual members active in various German cities, Marx and Engels sought to exert a revolutionising and organising influence on the labour movement in the country. In that new situation it was unwise

[1] Ibid., p. 7.

to preserve the strictly clandestine character of the Communist League. In bourgeois historiography the fabrication to the effect that Marx dissolved the Communist League in 1848 has assumed currency. As the Soviet historian E. P. Kandel has proved, nothing of the kind really happened: the League's leaders simply changed its tactics and methods of struggle within the masses, adapting both to the conditions of the growing revolution.[1]

Representatives of the League spoke at large workers' meetings, explaining the essence of current developments, the general national and the class objectives of the proletariat. The Communists made wide use of the rights and freedoms won in the course of the revolution, took part in the activities of the workers' unions, explaining their political tasks to the proletarians. In a number of cities the Communists took the initiative in organising such unions (in Mainz at the end of March, in Cologne in April). Wilhelm Wolff, a member of the Communist League, was actively involved in the efforts to draw the workers into political life in Silesia. Another member of the League, Stephan Born, also did much at the time to unite numerous workers' organisations which had spontaneously sprung up in Berlin. He founded a new association, which was named the Central Committee for the Workers (affiliating representatives of 28 trade unions). The Communists also took part in the establishment and practical activities of workers' unions in Breslau, Düsseldorf, Frankfort, Hannover, Kassel, Hamburg, Munich, and other cities. "Upon our return to Germany in the spring of 1848," Engels reminisced later, "we joined with the Democratic Party as the only possible means of gaining the ear of the working class; we were the most advanced wing of that party, but still a wing of it"; at the same time, Engels wrote further, the Communists did not conceal their own political position and preserved their organisation.[2] This principle of Marxist tactics—to adhere to the most consistent revolutionary positions in a bloc of forces fighting for the victory of revolution while ensuring the independence of the proletariat and unswervingly upholding its class interests—was invariably applied by Marx and Engels in practice and was further developed in Lenin's works in a changed historical situation. The first step in pursuing such dialectical tactics was the entry of Marx and Engels into the Cologne Democratic Society, a broad-based political organisation of a petty-bourgeois democratic type which commanded influence among the workers (such organisations were springing up throughout Germany at the time). Marx and Engels by no means regarded participation in a revolutionary

[1] E. P. Kandel, "Marx and Problems of History of the Communist League", *Marx As a Historian*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 475-97 (in Russian).

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 378.

democratic movement as an alternative to defence of the class interests of the proletariat (as is alleged by some bourgeois historians); they viewed it as a precondition for a truly proletarian policy.

Marx was an active participant and one of the leaders of the working-class movement in Cologne. Initially, the local workers' union was headed by Gottschalk, who was popular among the working people (as a doctor he visited patients in the city's proletarian districts). Founded on April 13 the workers' union soon acquired a massive membership. The activities of Gottschalk and his associates combined two outwardly contradictory tendencies, characteristic, incidentally, of the majority of those under the influence of "true socialism". On the one hand, Gottschalk was opposed to the workers' involvement in politics and regarded any parliamentary activity as useless; on the other hand, aware of the increasing involvement of the labour movement in Cologne in political activities, he urged the proletarians to struggle for the immediate establishment of working-class government. These tendencies were at variance only at first glance; actually they were in perfect harmony with the general conception of "true socialism".

The keynote of the arguments of "true socialists" was as follows: capitalism is reactionary and hence its advancement must be checked; the political struggle waged by the liberals can only contribute to the growth of capitalism; consequently, the workers and Communists must renounce politics and appeal to "man", to his feelings, his will, his religion. In a revolutionary situation the rebelliousness of Socialists of this trend, their resentment against the developing capitalist order could not be confined to sentimental appeals alone—hence Gottschalk's advocacy of the idea of a "workers' republic." It expressed the aspirations of a Utopian Socialist seeking to put an end to the capitalist order but failing to find within it a fulcrum for overturning it and therefore resorting to an incendiary political slogan.

After their arrival in Cologne Marx and Engels resolutely dissociated themselves from Gottschalk. In particular, they criticised his attitude to elections to the National Assembly: Gottschalk objected to the workers' going to the polls. Marx and Engels considered such abstention from political struggle intolerable. In June 1848 Gottschalk withdrew from the Communist League. Another member, Joseph Moll, an associate of Marx and Engels, was elected chairman of the Cologne workers' union. On the instructions of the Central Committee of the Communist League he made a tour of many large German cities to meet the leaders of local workers' unions and uphold the policy line of Marx and Engels. Orienting the workers on political struggle as the vanguard and independent force of the democratic revolution Marx and Engels thereby acted as the most con-

sistent champions of the interests of the proletarians. It was precisely this class that they represented in the ranks of revolutionary democracy.

Evidently, when he was still in Paris Marx had conceived a plan to found a political daily with a mass circulation. On June 1, 1848 Marx, Engels and their associates started the publication of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. The newspaper was an "organ of democracy"; this meant that it was affiliated with the so-called Democratic Party, a broad-based association of democratic unions functioning in German cities. Writing for this paper, Marx, Engels and their followers influenced the Democratic Party, in which they represented the revolutionary proletariat, and at the same time continued the theoretical and practical development of its programme, strategy and tactics.

Working out the political line of the Communists in the German revolution, Marx and Engels presumed that it could not yet be a socialist revolution: the German people were confronted by the task of revolutionary implementation of bourgeois-democratic reforms. At the same time, relying on the basic principles of their innovative materialistic interpretation of history, Marx and Engels emphasised that the workers had a vested interest in the most consistent bourgeois revolution since it is "a precondition for the *workers' revolution*".[1] As Marx and Engels showed on the pages of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* the March revolution in Prussia and other German states was far from complete and half-hearted; the liberal bourgeoisie had allied itself with the feudal-monarchist counter-revolution and betrayed the people who had won the battle on the barricades; the revolution had slowed down its tempo from the very outset. For all that it was the first German revolution in which the workers, awakened from their political slumber, had borne the brunt of the struggle. "The most important achievement of the revolution is *the revolution itself*," *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* wrote in June 1848.[2] From the standpoint of Marx and Engels (which was corroborated by later developments) a polarisation of forces was in progress in the country, the bourgeoisie was growing more and more cowardly and defecting to the side of monarchist reaction. From here followed this conclusion: the revolution could culminate either in the establishment of dictatorship of the people or, conversely, in a reversion to the former, absolutist order. A similar process had also been in evidence in France until June, but there the alignment of class forces had assumed a perfectly simple form: a confrontation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat which had resolved in showdown battle in June. In Germany

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 333.
[2] Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 78.

the situation was more complicated, because here a conflict was imminent between feudal-monarchist reaction allied with the liberal bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the workers, peasants and democratic petty bourgeoisie, on the other.

Neue Rheinische Zeitung actively promulgated the idea of a united democratic Germany. This historic task, Marx and Engels presumed, could be accomplished only through revolution. The newspaper rejected the liberal-bourgeois plans of a united German monarchy. The "organ of democracy" headed by Marx and Engels came out for a united and indivisible German republic (for some time Marx and Engels, reckoning with the monarchist illusions of the vast majority of the German working people, had not put forward the slogan of a republic as a slogan of immediate action). Marx and Engels never tired of explaining to the German proletarians that they should by no means be indifferent to the form of bourgeois class rule; indeed, it was precisely a democratic republic that would offer the best vantage-ground for the impending battle against the bourgeoisie. At the same time *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* appealed not for a bourgeois but for a "red", social republic.[1] This peculiar term borrowed from the political lexicon of the French Revolution meant a state where political power belongs to the people and social reforms are implemented in the interests of the proletarians playing an increasingly important part in the affairs of the state. In other words, a "red republic" was a transitional state which could facilitate the uninterrupted progress of revolution.

Further, the newspaper under Marx and Engels propagated the idea of the people's sovereign power: from the viewpoint of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the all-Germany and the Prussian national assemblies could acquire real and formidable power only if they acted as organs of a sovereign people; their refusal to rely on the revolutionary masses doomed them to political impotence. Comparing the cowardly conduct of the conciliatory German parliaments with the activities of the French revolutionary Convent of 1793-1794, Marx and Engels concluded that the German bourgeoisie was incapable of courageous action or, if necessary, of acts of terror against the enemies of the revolution like those undertaken by the Convent at one time. In this context *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* staunchly upheld the principle of universal armament of the people: only if this principle was carried into effect could the people truly assume sovereign power.

In accordance with the views of Marx and Engels, *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* regarded the German revolution as part and parcel of European revolution. Marx and Engels explained that a battle was

[1] Moreover, Marx and Engels repeatedly indicated that the bourgeoisie did not and would not dare to come forward under a republican banner.

incipient between the forces of international reaction and international revolution on the European continent. At the time the forces of European counter-revolution were headed by Russian tzarism and the English oligarchy, which were allied with Hohenzollern Prussia and Habsburg Austria in their struggle against the revolutionary movement.

During the revolutionary years Marx and Engels devoted great attention to the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples. They believed that by fulfilling their internationalist duty to the peoples struggling for national freedom the German people contributed to their own emancipation. Marx and Engels followed with sympathy the struggle of the Czech insurgents in June 1848; coverage of the Polish problem was allotted much space on the pages of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. They came forward as determined champions of Poland's independence. "The creation of a democratic Poland is a primary condition for the creation of a democratic Germany"—such was their principal thesis on the Polish problem.[1] They also attached great significance to the liberation struggle of the Hungarian and Italian peoples.

Leading the most radical wing of German democrats, Marx and Engels acted as spokesmen of the interests of the proletariat, as proletarian revolutionaries. They attached first priority to the tasks of involving the German workers in organised political struggle and of preparing for new, more revolutionary actions. At the same time, *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* gave prominence to articles describing the position of the German workers and their struggle in defence of their current, day-to-day interests.

All the principal directions in the activities of Marx and Engels converged on one general task—to contribute in every way to the advancement of the German proletariat to the vanguard, consistently democratic positions in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, so that its victory could provide the best vantage ground for the working class to go ahead with a socialist revolution.

THE WORKERS' RESISTANCE TO A COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY OFFENSIVE. REARGUARD BATTLES

Whereas in the period between March and June 1848 the German counter-revolution had been gathering forces, after the defeat of the June uprising in Paris, which was a turning-point in the history of the European revolution of 1848-1849, reaction went over to the offensive on all fronts. As Marx pointed out, "Cavaignac's 300,000

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 351.

men defeated not only the 40,000 workers, but, without realising it, defeated the European revolution. We all know what an impetuous storm of reaction set in from that day."[1] The monarchists in Germany little by little took back the concessions wrested from them in the stormy days of March. Relying on the army, the reactionaries more and more often staged massacres of the workers. For example, at the end of July troops fired at a public demonstration in the Silesian town of Schweidnitz.

Now the main task facing Germany's revolutionary forces was to preserve their democratic achievements. The German Communists were guided by the principle that active resistance to the plans of reaction could set the stage for another revolutionary tide, a "new revolution". They were particularly active in Rhine province. Here, as was pointed out above, the workers' unions, in Cologne in the first place, played an important part in the democratic movement. In June Communist League members attended as delegates of the workers' and democratic unions the first democratic congress in Frankfort. In mid-July a district committee of Rhine democratic unions was founded in Cologne. It was composed of representatives of the Cologne Workers' Union, the Democratic Society, and the Society of Workers and Employers. Marx was elected chairman of the committee.

Most of the workers' unions founded in many regions of Germany were guided by petty-bourgeois democrats. They turned their attention to political problems more and more often, although they concentrated, as a rule, on the struggle for immediate improvement of the economic position of the proletariat. Such "economism" was particularly characteristic of the workers of the German states east of the Elbe. Although it was a step forward from the pre-revolutionary period, the workers' concentration on economic problems distracted their attention from political problems and hence lessened the activity of the working class in the revolution.

The above-mentioned trait of the German labour movement was especially manifest in the activities of Stephan Born, a type-setter and member of the Communist League. He was a many-sided and contradictory figure. Later, bourgeois and right-wing socialist historians made him their idol: they opposed Born's views and practices to the views and activities of Marx and Engels, depicting him as a wouthpiece of only the trends towards compromise in the German morking-class movement, the founding father of German reformism. In the opinion of the present-day West German historian, W. Konze and his followers (the Heidelberg school), Born's activities pursued only one goal—to "integrate the workers" into the bourgeois society

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 103.

taking shape in Germany. Upholding this thesis, historians of the Heidelberg school ignore some essential aspects of the trend represented by Born in the German working-class movement.[1] Of course, his activities were marked by a strong opportunist trend, "akin to our Economists", as Lenin assessed it later.[2] At the same time, Born's activities contained important elements, which were objectively of revolutionary significance.

As mentioned in the foregoing, in the spring of 1848 Born had organised the Central Committee for the Workers. Shortly afterwards he became member of the editorial board of *Deutche Arbeiter Zeitung*. This newspaper declared its intention to act as a German workers' parliament. It was expected that it would not only assist in uniting the proletarians but also help settle conflicts between workers and employers. In other words, the newspaper with Born playing an increasingly prominent part in its editorial board seemed to try to imitate the functions of the Luxembourg commission (in a German variant).

Trusting that the workers could reach "agreement" with the capitalists, Born believed, nevertheless, that the newspaper must become an independent mouthpiece of labour opinion. Faced with opposition from other members of the editorial board, he decided to found another newspaper—*Das Volk*, as he announced at a meeting of the Central Committee for the Workers on May 10. The latter took a decision to publish it as its organ. On May 25 the specimen copy, and on June 1 the first issue came off the press. The specimen copy featured an editorial entitled "What We Want", which contained, in particular, the following passage: "Speaking of a people a tendency is often in evidence to refer to individuals from all walks of life, yet this paper represents only one definite class in the state—the working class. We have chosen the word 'people' (*das Volk*) for its name in the belief that as long as class differentiation exists, this word will always apply to that class in society which is oppressed, which earns its bread in wages and whose very existence is still insecure ... the class that lives only by the day and looks to no other future but misery and desperate resistance."[3]

---

[1] For greater detail see criticism of the conception of the history of the German labour movement presented in the works of Konze and his followers: E. P. Kandel, "The Development by Engels of Problems of the History of the Labour Movement in Germany and the Significance of This Contribution for Struggle Against Bourgeois and Reformist Conceptions", in: *Engels and Problems of History*, Moscow, 1970, pp. 139-80 (in Russian); E. P. Kandel, "Tracing the Origin of One Bourgeois Myth (concerning the tactics of Marx and Engels in the Communist League of 1848-1849)", *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, No. 5, 1968, pp. 120-32.

[2] See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 139.

[3] *Das Volk*, May 25, 1848, p.1.

Das Volk was the organ of a workers' association of a predominantly economic character. It gave priority mostly to socio-economic problems. That was its vulnerable spot, because Born and his followers, urging reconciliation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, presumed that this objective could be achieved through association of workers in a struggle to improve their economic position. They advocated "corporations" affiliating both workers and capitalists to be set up in various industries; at the same time, they upheld the principle of workers' associations relying on assistance from a democratic state. Born sought to establish institutions in which, as he put it, the worker would simultaneously be a capitalist, and the capitalist, a worker. He expected that such associations would oust capitalist enterprises. Born's views were, of course, Utopian.

Simultaneously, *Das Volk* paid certain attention to the political tasks of the workers in the revolution; Born's programme contained many of the provisions formulated in "Demands of the Communist Party in Germany". Born showed an understanding of the international character of proletarian struggle. The editorial devoted to the "workers' uprising in Paris" published in *Das Volk* on July 4 pointed out that "we have the right" to come out in defence of our fellow workers, German, French, or English: "The workers are not divided either by language or by a state border; they have a common interest — liberation from the fetters of the money yoke." And further: "On the streets of Paris the workers fought not only for their own, French interests; they also fought for us, they fell for us, and now we have to pay homage to our fallen brothers and shed tears on their fresh graves." The June uprising was assessed in the following words: "The current struggle is but an extension of the February Revolution. This is a continuation of the struggle going on throughout Europe for a just distribution of the products of labour. Even if the uprising in Paris is defeated, the struggle will be resumed again and again." True, acknowledging that "the middle class has become more barbarian than the workers" the article at the same time expressed regret that both sides had discarded "all fraternal feelings" (these words reflected Born's faith in the possibility of a compromise between the working class and the bourgeoisie).[1]

It was only under the influence of Marx and Engels that Stephan Born arrived at the conclusion that a solution to the social problem could be achieved only in a democratic state and came out against

[1] In our day Marxist historians of the GDR have proved conclusively that the social-reformist conception in the newspaper *Das Volk* co-existed with a revolutionary one. See, for example, Gerhard Becker, "Stephan Born als Korrespondent der 'Neuen Rheinischen Zeitung'. Zu seiner politischen Tätigkeit in Berlin bis August 1848", in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, Issue 5, Berlin, 1973, S. 548-83.

those alleging that the working class was indifferent to the form of statehood. *Das Volk* reprinted from *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* items that took up almost one third of the available space. On foreign policy problems it followed the latter's line. For his part, Born often contributed to the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.

The Workers' Congress held in Berlin late in August 1848 was attended by delegates from forty organisations (from East Prussia, Mecklenburg, and Saxony). The congress formed a general national workers' organisation—the Workers' Brotherhood (on the basis of the Central Committee for the Berlin Workers). Before long, the Brotherhood was joined by about 100 unions. Many of them were interested only in purely economic problems, but some of them engaged in political activities as well. Some time later the Central Committee of the Brotherhood set up its headquarters in Leipzig.

The formation in Germany of the first proletarian organisation on a national scale was a milestone event in the history of the working-class movement, an important success in the development and consolidation of the solidarity of the German proletarians. Stephan Born was elected its leader. The activities of the Workers' Brotherhood had a contradictory character. It concentrated on organising strikes, trade unions, and co-operative associations whereas in Engels' view "it was a question of first conquering, by means of political victories, the field in which alone such thing could be realised on a lasting basis."[1]

While bearing in mind the opportunist aspect of Born's activities, it is necessary, however, to note at least one more circumstance. Born was one of the leaders of a truly massive labour organisation, and this fact could not be ignored by Marx and Engels, who sought to exert a constant influence on the labour movement through members of the Communist League. They by no means believed that Born had deliberately defected to the side of the bourgeoisie and regarded him merely as a man harbouring supra-class illusions. Marx and Engels knew that illusions of this kind reflected the state of the German mass labour movement in general and expected that they would gradually evaporate in the course of the revolution. In the interests of the revolution and the development of the class self-awareness of the proletariat Marx and Engels sought therefore to use the objectively revolutionary aspects of Born's activities. His reformism combined with revolutionary traits embodied primarily the inadequately clear realisation of their own class interests by the mass of the German workers (even at a time when they rose for direct revolutionary action). This, in the final analysis, accounted for the attitude of

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 185.

Marx and Engels to Born in 1848: he represented a mass movement which was discarding more illusions than it was acquiring.

In the autumn of 1848, the counter-revolution in Prussia launched a decisive offensive. Early in September the government obedient to the court refused to fulfil the decision of the National Assembly to discharge reactionary officers from the army. In the meantime heated debates on the war with Denmark flared up in the Frankfort Assembly. That was the only war of liberation Germany waged at the time. The democratic forces of the German people regarded that war as consistent with justice because its aim was to liberate a German national territory—Schleswig-Holstein. The Prussian government concluded an armistice with Denmark, thereby dooming the liberation movement in Schleswig-Holstein to defeat.

Just like in May 1848 when the French democrats had focussed their attention on the Polish problem and used it for their struggle against the counter-revolutionary government, in Germany the attention of broad democratic circles was riveted on the problem of Schleswig-Holstein. Marx and Engels expected important results from the movement of protest against the Prussian government's policy of treason. The democratic forces in the German states closely followed the debates on this problem in the Frankfort parliament. Its refusal to ratify Prussia's treaty with Denmark would mean a rupture with the Prussian government. This did not happen: the "national parliament" approved the treaty, which was tantamount to a capitulation to Prussia. By this decision the Frankfort parliament sealed its own fate. It discredited itself in the eyes of a wide section of public opinion. Meetings held throughout the country demanded that the left-wing deputies walk out of the Frankfort "talking-shop". However, representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy, who constituted the left wing of the Frankfort Assembly, showed indecision and inactivity.

In the meantime. the counter-revolution was not marking time. On the night of September 17 it became known that the Frankfort City Senate had taken a decision to request the imperial government to send troops for defence of parliament. Two battalions—Prussian and Austrian—were called in from Mainz. In the morning of September 18 troops occupied the square in front of the St. Paul Church, where the Assembly was in session. The liberal majority "legalised" this situation by an official plea for defence addressed to the Prussian and Austrian militarists. A crowd of unarmed citizens attempted to break into the parliament hall and was attacked by troops. Then a call rang out: "Down with the Prussians!" Barricades went up on many streets. The bulk of the insurgents consisted of workers and artisans. It was a struggle not only and not so much over the issue of the war between Prussia and

Denmark; it was a rebellion of workers, craftsmen and their petty-bourgeois allies against the all-Germany parliament turned into a tool of counter-revolution.

The working people of neighbouring towns, members of workers' and sports societies who possessed arms came to the aid of the workers and craftsmen of Frankfort. Before their march to Frankfort inhabitants of Hanau burst into the the Arsenal and seized weapons. A small reinforcement came from villages around Frankfort. The barricades were defended by a total of 2,000-3,000 fighters. In the evening of September 18 troops attacked them but were hurled back. It was not until Prussian, Austrian, Bavarian, Würtemberg and Hessen units arrived and cannon was put into action that the insurgents' fierce resistance was broken. A state of siege was clamped on the city, the democratic associations banned, and civilians disarmed. The neighbouring communities were also terrorised.

The Frankfort uprising indicated a growing polarisation. Of course, it was far behind the June uprising in Paris in its scope, its aims and class awareness. There was, however, a common feature: both were popular uprisings against parliaments which themselves had been formed as a result of mass revolutionary actions. The bourgeoisie (liberals in Germany and republicans in France) shifted considerably to the right and finally turned from a "reluctant participant" in the revolution into its overt enemy and suppressor.

German reaction mounted a decisive offensive between late October and November 1848. In Prussia it dealt a blow at the National Assembly, whose relations with the King and his entourage had been going from bad to worse for some time. On November 2, Friedrich-Wilhelm IV requested Count Brandenburg, a notorious reactionary, to form a new cabinet. On November 8, the King issued a decree banishing the National Assembly from Berlin to the townlet of Brandenburg. After a few days a state of siege was declared in Berlin. Fearing a popular revolution more than the dissolution of the National Assembly the bourgeois liberals failed to offer any effective resistance to the offensive of reaction. The petty-bourgeois democrats, who had been setting the tone in the National Assembly in the last few weeks of its existence, did not dare to call the masses to arms. Nevertheless, the workers, craftsmen, small traders in many towns of Prussia stirred to action. Large rallies were held spontaneously. On November 23 and 24 the people clashed with troops in Erfurt. Where strong workers' unions existed (in Königsberg, Halle) reaction encountered the most stubborn resistance. In Berlin, the district committee of the Workers' Brotherhood offered its support to the Assembly. The leadership of the Brotherhood recommended a few of its committees to organise the issue of arms to the workers. The workers' unions of Rhine Province and its democratic associations, in

which the workers played an important part, assumed a consistent stance in defence of the achievements gained in March. The Prussian National Assembly, however, did not venture to rely on the people's support. On December 5, the King issued a decree dissolving it.

The working-class movement in Germany was not suppressed at once and as forcibly as had been the case in France following the June uprising. In many cities workers' unions continued to operate as long as certain legal opportunities were left open: individual achievements gained by the people in the March revolution (freedom of the press, assembly, etc.) had not yet been abolished.

Now it became clear to vanguard workers that petty-bourgeois democracy was incapable of determined revolutionary action. In that situation the Communist League, relying on the workers' spontaneous gravitation towards political association, took a course for setting up an all-Germany political organisation. At the end of January 1849 a congress of the workers' unions of south-western Germany was held in Heidelberg. It announced its accession to the Workers' Brotherhood and resolved to set up a General German Workers' Union in the future. It was planned to form it at an all-Germany workers' congress in Leipzig in June 1848. *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* commented with approval on the resolutions of the Heidelberg congress. In the spring of 1849 other regional congresses of workers' unions were held.

Neue Rheinische Zeitung and the Cologne workers' union were in the vanguard of the struggle to establish a united political organisation of the working class in Rhine Province. In April 1849 the latter union joined the Workers' Brotherhood and called on all the workers' unions of the Rhine Province to set up a regional association. The provincial committee of Rhine-Westphalia workers' unions was elected; one of its tasks was to convene a congress of local workers' organisations (within the framework of preparations for the coming congress in Leipzig). The victory of counter-revolution, the suppression of progressive associations, the abolition of democratic freedoms made a Leipzig congress impossible. A united national organisation of the working class was never founded in those years.

Between May and July 1849 the final battles between the reactionary forces and the people took place in certain parts of Germany; it was a struggle for a national Constitution. It was not until late March 1849 that the Frankfort Assembly approved a draft Constitution after a long controversy. It was not devoid of some progressive features: there was a provision for a definite degree of centralisation of Germany and the enforcement of a bourgeois constitutional system throughout the country. The Constitution, however, by no means provided for the establishment of a united German republic. Germany remained a monarchy ruled by the Prussian royal house; the

German kingdoms and principalities were to continue to exist within the framework of a federal "little German" (i.e., excluding Austria) association. The Constitution restricted the rights of individual states within this federal union.

The draft approved by the Frankfort Assembly was strongly opposed by the German monarchs. Friedrich-Wilhelm IV declined the imperial crown offered to him. The governments of Prussia, Austria, Bavaria, Saxony, and Hannover expressed their objections to the Constitution drafted by the Frankfort Assembly. Then the popular masses began a struggle for the recognition of the imperial Constitution.

In May 1849 revolts under the slogan of the imperial Constitution broke out in several German states. The workers were actively involved in them; the more class-conscious proletarians believed that the struggle for the Constitution could grow into a struggle for a democratic republic. This struggle was led by petty-bourgeois democracy, but the core of the insurgents, their most determined and concious contingent, consisted of workers. Members of the Communist League took a most active part in the battles. One of the most significant events of the struggle was the uprising in Dresden, where the workers and craftsmen bore the brunt of the fighting. The workers also revolted in Rhine-Westphalia. In that situation, Prussian reaction suppressed the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*; its last issue came out on May 19, 1849.

As a result of the popular uprisings in May 1849 the reactionary governments were overthrown in Baden and the Palatinate. The Baden army went over to the side of the revolution. The petty-bourgeois leaders, however, failed to take advantage of the favourable situation. On June 12, troops of Crown Prince Wilhelm invaded Baden and the Palatinate. The revolutionary Baden-Palatinate army incorporated workers' units with many Communists in their ranks. Engels took a direct part in four battles. Speaking later of the struggle for the imperial Constitution in May 1849, he underscored: "In all cases, the *real fighting* body of the insurgents, that body which first took up arms and gave battle to the troops, consisted of the *working classes of the towns*. A portion of the poorer country population, labourers and petty farmers, generally joined them after the actual outbreak of the conflict."[1] Students displayed serious vacillations when it came to a decisive conflict.

On July 23, 1849 the last bastion of the German revolution—Rastatt—fell. The counter-revolutionary terror swept over Baden and t e Palatinate.

What were the causes of the defeat of the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1848-1849 in Germany? The absence of a single political

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol 11, pp. 87-88.

centre due to the country's fragmentation; the traitorous behaviour of the liberal bourgeoisie; indecision and vacillations on the part of petty-bourgeois democracy; the inadequate organisation and political awareness of the German proletariat, which prevented it taking leadership of the revolution into its own hands; the stability of the monarchist traditions—such were these causes. The German revolution failed to accomplish the tasks set before it by history: a united democratic Germany was not established; the absolutist order was preserved, if only in a slightly modified form; the landed aristocracy remained as before the dominant class in the German states. The bourgeois-democratic rights and freedoms won by the German people in March 1848 were almost completely abolished after the defeat of the revolution.

The historical significance of this abortive revolution consisted not only in that reaction had to make certain concessions (for instance, in October 1848 Friedrich-Wilhelm IV "granted" a Constitution; on March 2, 1850 a law was enacted, which allowed Prussian peasants to pay off their feudal obligations). The revolution of 1848-1849 was an important landmark on the path of social and political formation of the German proletariat; it contributed to a steep growth in the political activity of the workers, created a situation where they realised for the first time that they constituted a social class capable of exerting a powerful influence on the country's political and social life. The actions of the proletarians in the country's biggest centres as a determined revolutionary force; the transition to massive forcible actions against the monarchy; the first attempts to combine the national and class tasks of the proletariat in a mass revolutionary movement; the setting up of trades associations in many industrial cities of various German states; the appearance and energetic activities of workers' political unions—Germany had known nothing of the kind before. In 1848 the workers of Germany made a long stride forward along the path of conversion into a "class for themselves".

History bore out the foresight of Marx, who attached crucial importance to the 1844 uprising of the weavers of two Silesian villages lost in the backwoods. As pointed out above, Marx regarded these events as proof of his conclusion concerning the general laws of the social formation and political advancement of the proletariat. Now, in 1848, the monarchy and the big bourgeoisie allied with it were confronted not by two or three hundred hungry and despairing weavers, but by a formidable national force, whose power was just beginning to show: scores of thousands of workers stirred to action.

Marx called revolutions locomotives of history. This idea is essential for understanding the problem of the evolution of the political independence of the proletariat. In the tensest days and months of a revolution when one important political event overlaps another,

the positions of the struggling classes rapidly change, and leaders of the propertied classes discard masks they have been wearing for decades and their true faces become exposed; when the armed working man is constantly aware of his ability to fight back and attack; when changes that usually take decades to come occur in one day, one week, or one month—then the mind and will of the class implementing the revolution are strained more than ever before. It becomes capable of realising what was beyond its comprehension. Fighting in the vanguard of the nation's revolutionary offensive, the proletariat gains diversified political experience within a brief space of time. Implementing a democratic revolution, the workers for the first time, if only temporarily, become aware of themselves as a mighty force capable of defeating the enemy and making a gigantic leap towards political independence. In other words, these are days of the political enlightenment and revolutionary creativity of the masses awakened to a life of independence. In the revolution of 1848 the French workers advanced farther than the German workers in this direction, but the working-class movement in both countries developed along the same general lines. The events of 1848 in Germany as well indicated that it is precisely in revolutionary periods that the proletariat most effectively, irreversibly and rapidly forms into a class called upon to liberate society.

THE WORKING CLASS AND THE REVOLUTION IN THE AUSTRIAN EMPIRE

Between late February and early March 1848 news of a revolution in Paris and democratic movements in the states of south-west Germany reached Vienna. In an attempt to prevent a revolutionary explosion the Austrian liberal bourgeoisie demanded constitutional reforms.[1] Like Friedrich-Wilhelm IV, the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand I declared his intention to suppress any attempt to overthrow the legal order in the country.[2] On March 11-13 disturbances began in the working-class suburbs of the capital. The workers of the Glognitz engineering factory assembled for a meeting where they called on the working people of the capital to follow the example of the Parisian proletarians. Unrest broke out among the Viennese students who shared the sentiments of the working people (it was not accidental that Chancellor Metternich, who cruelly persecuted any dissent, regarded the Viennese students as potential enemies of the Empire).

[1] For greater detail see: R. A. Averbukh, *The Revolution in Austria (1848-1849)*, Moscow, 1970 (in Russian).

[2] Ibid., p. 61.

Early in March students repeatedly appealed to the Emperor for the introduction of civil liberties and universal popular representation. A student demonstration was scheduled for March 13. Its organisers called on the workers to join it. On March 13, an enormous crowd consisting mainly of workers, craftsmen, students and small shopkeepers assembled in front of the Lower Austrian Diet. Troops were placed on the combat alert.

Already in the morning residents of the Vienna's proletarian suburbs marched towards the city's central quarter to join the demonstration. The workers' columns were stopped by troops, and only isolated groups from the suburbs infiltrated the city. Soldiers guarding the Diet opened fire on the crowd. Unarmed workers and students battled with troops. Barricades were quickly built in some districts of the capital. The uprising quickly spread to Vienna's working-class suburbs—Sechshaus, Fünfhaus, and others.

In the meantime, one delegation after another headed for the palace, demanding the resignation of Metternich. Towards evening the Emperor took a decision to dismiss the Chancellor. Metternich fled from the city. In the same evening, a paramilitary students' organisation—the Academic Legion—was formed. In the morning of March 14, the workers' uprising continued to rage in Vienna's suburbs; the workers smashed up police stations and the offices of tax-collectors. Bourgeois units of the National Guard were called in. On the whole, however, the Vienna bourgeoisie took a stand against the government in the March days.

In the evening of March 14, two decrees were promulgated on behalf of Ferdinand I: on convening an assembly of representatives of the estates of the lands, as well as the central congregations of the Kingdom of Lombardy and Venice not later than July 3; the second decree abolished censorship and promised a law on the press.

On March 15, there was another explosion of popular resentment in Vienna. An enormous crowd besieged the Emperor's Palace. Then Ferdinand I only reaffirmed his earlier instructions for the abolition of censorship, and promised to enact a Constitution at an early date. The Burgomaster of Vienna was replaced by a Provisional Committee composed of representatives of the liberal nobility and the bourgeoisie.

The Vienna revolution of March 13-15 was carried out by students, workers, craftsmen and small traders, "one and all, arose at once against a government detested by all", Engels wrote.[1] He pointed out that the "revolution of Vienna may be said to have been made by an almost unanimous population".[2]

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 32.
[2] Ibid.

At the same time, Engels noted a cooling off of relations between the bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the "turbulent students and working people",[1] on the other. Nevertheless, he pointed out, each time the spectre of Metternich's despotism appeared before the participants in the March movement, the armed bourgeoisie joined with the students and the workers.

However, the decisive battles in Vienna still lay ahead. The draft Constitution published on April 25 provided, in fact, only for the institution of advisory bodies under the Emperor, who remained in possession of sovereign authority. Suffrage was limited by a property qualification denying the vote to many categories of working people. The draft Constitution contained no provision for ending the system of feudalism and serfdom. Austrian reaction obviously wanted to gain time, expecting the tide of revolution to ebb in Vienna and other cities.

By a decree of May 14 the Emperor dissolved the political committee of the National Guard on which representatives of both the liberal bourgeoisie and the democratic strata were seated. The Academic Legion demanded that the government repeal this decree and consent to National Guard supervision of government troops. The students were supported by the workers, who rushed from the suburbs to the city centre. The slogan of the May democratic movement in Vienna was the calling of a Constituent Reichstag, the government's renunciation of the draft Constitution of April 25 and the restoration of the political committee of the National Guard. The working people of Vienna began to build barricades again. By that time the students and the workers had armed themselves. On May 16 the Emperor's court and the government were forced to meet the demands of the people of the capital, and on the next day Ferdinand I with his family and court fled from Vienna to Innsbruck.

The concessions made but little changes in the state system: the aristocracy retained all the key posts in the military and administrative apparatus of government. Innsbruck was turned into the headquarters of counter-revolution, and preparations got under way here for a military conquest of Vienna, plans were being drawn up to annul all concessions and disarm the people. On May 26 the government decided to disband the Academic Legion. Government troops seized all strategic points in Vienna.

The government's actions came up against stubborn resistance from the students, workers and National Guardsmen. Barricades sprang up all over the city again. Their total number grew to 160. The workers again moved into Vienna from the suburbs. Red banners were hoisted over the barricades. The railwaymen, building workers,

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 33.

printers, and machine-builders played a particularly important part in the uprising of May 26. The workers and students put up a determined fight. This time, however, the liberal bourgeoisie, left face to face with the armed people, sharply swung to the right. Now it feared not so much an all-out victory for reaction as it feared the progress of the revolution.

Frightened by the upsurge of the popular movement, the government which had not enough troops in the capital (the main forces had been sent to Italy and Hungary) rescinded its decree on the disbandment of the Academic Legion. The revolutionary people, however, now presented greater demands: withdrawal of government troops from the capital and the return of the Emperor. In the evening of May 26 workers and students arrested the most hated reactionaries and freed the democrats held in prisons. On May 27 a crowd of thousands of workers marched on the Arsenal to seize weapons. The petty-bourgeois leaders of the movement, however, succeeded in persuading the workers that the danger of restoration of the old order no longer existed. The workers fell back.

After the May events the government made further concessions, promulgating a new election law which substantially widened the range of persons eligible to vote. Later, expecting a counter-revolutionary coup to take place soon, it even announced the enactment of universal suffrage.

The May events indicated that the revolution in Austria was still on the upgrade: the reactionary government was so far compelled to retreat.

The imperial Reichstag went into session at the end of July. The democrats constituted a small faction within it. Representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie and the nobility were running the show. The democrats openly declared their distrust of the Emperor. Nevertheless, the Reichstag expressed its loyalty to the monarch and petitioned him to return to the capital. The Emperor complied. In the meantime, the court continued to prepare a counter-revolutionary coup.

One of the key issues on the agenda of the Reichstag was the peasant question. The democrats put forward a demand for the abolition of serfdom and feudal obligations without compensation. The conservative deputies insisted that the agrarian reform be implemented on terms advantageous to the landed aristocracy. On September 1, the Reichstag passed a resolution on the abolition of corvée; the bourgeois-nobiliary majority of the Reichstag expressed themselves in favour of compensation to the landlords. On September 7, the Emperor sanctioned the abolition of personal bondage of the peasants and of feudal dues on the basis of compensation.

In the summer of 1848, during the high tide of the revolution, the

first large workers' organisations were set up in Vienna. The biggest of them was the Universal Workers' Union. Unions of printers and textile-workers also sprang up. These organisations waged mostly economic struggles. In August the government undertook an offensive against the workers, reducing the wages of those employed on public works; it regarded state aid to the unemployed as a gross violation of the existing "order". Expecting labour unrest over the reduction in wages the government decided to rely on the bourgeois National Guard. It succeeded in provoking the workers to an unprepared action. On August 23, clashes took place between the workers, on the one hand, and the National Guard and government troops, on the other. The workers displayed extraordinary courage in that battle. Workers of numerous enterprises in the city came to the aid of the proletarians employed on public works. Towards evening on August 23 government troops and the National Guard had suppressed the resistance of the proletariat. Thirty workers were killed and 300 wounded.[1] In the words of Engels, the ruthless massacre of Vienna's workers by the bourgeois National Guard on August 23 broke "the unity and strength of the revolutionary force".[2] Marx who had arrived in Vienna on August 28 described the movement of August 23 as an uprising of the workers against the bourgeoisie, as the prologue to the future class battles of the proletariat.

The decisive battle between the revolution and the counter-revolution took place in Vienna in October 1848. The Austrian government was planning an offensive against revolutionary Hungary. As far back as mid-September it had been invaded by the army of the Croatian ban Jelačić who had sided with the Habsburgs. At the end of the month the Hungarian revolutionary army had driven it back to the Austrian border. Jelačić's army pitched camp not far from Vienna.

The war of the Austrian monarchy against revolutionary Hungary aroused resentment within the democratic strata in Vienna. On October 6, 1848 its people revolted. The workers, students, and petty townsfolk took an active part in it. The uprising was sparked off by the government's order to send a part of the Viennese garrison to the assistance of Jelačić. The fulfilment of this order was obstructed by armed students, craftsmen, and workers. The bulk of the National Guard supported the people. Fighting with government troops flared up. A fierce battle was fought in St. Stephen Square in the city's central quarter. Workers from the suburbs had forced their way here, and "black-and-yellow" troops of the National Guard loyal to the government opened fire on them. The workers were supported by stu-

[1] For greater detail see: R. A. Averbukh, "The Working-Class Movement in Vienna in August 1848", in: *The Centenary of the Revolution of 1848*, Ed. by B. F. Porshnev and L. A. Bendrikova, Moscow, 1949, p. 113 *et seq.*

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 56.

dents. For its part, the government sent reinforcements to the troops. The workers, students and democratic units of the National Guard repulsed the government forces. The people burst into the offices of the War Ministry and lynched the hated Minister Latour. Towards the end of the day on October 6 the greater part of Vienna was in the hands of the insurgents. In the evening crowds assembled in front of the Arsenal with intent to storm it and seize weapons. Reichstag deputies vainly tried to stop the crowds by declaring that the Arsenal was national property. The insurgents managed to seize one of the Arsenal depots. In the meantime, the imperial troops defending it received reinforcements. The storming of the Arsenal, however, continued. In the morning the Arsenal garrison surrendered. The people burst into the Arsenal and seized 50,000 rifles. The workers of the Vienna suburbs, who constituted the most determined and battleworthy insurgent force, played the decisive part in the events of October 6. On October 7 the battle resumed. The Emperor, the court, and the Ministers fled from the capital to Olmütz. War was declared on revolutionary Vienna.

The October uprising of 1848 in Vienna was carried out by the joint efforts of the proletariat, craftsmen, students, the city poor and petty-bourgeois intellectuals. The bourgeoisie sided with the counter-revolution. The insurgents faced a complicated situation. The command of the National Guard was in the hands of bourgeois liberals. The insurgent forces—the National Guard and the Academic Legion—had no joint command. The revolutionary people of Vienna had no plan of further action. Part of the students, who constituted the political core of the movement, withdrew from the revolution.

Engels described the situation in Vienna after the victory of the October uprising as follows: "In Vienna ... confusion and helplessness was prevalent. The middle class, as soon as the victory was gained, became again possessed of their old distrust against the 'anarchic' working classes; the working men, mindful of the treatment they had received, six weeks before, at the hands of the armed trades men, and of the unsteady, wavering policy of the middle class at large, would not trust to them the defence of the city, and demanded arms and military organisation for themselves. The Academic Legion, full of zeal of the struggle against imperial despotism, were entirely incapable of understanding the nature of the estrangement of the two classes, or of otherwise comprehending the necessities of the situation. There was confusion in the public mind, confusion in the ruling councils."[1]

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, pp. 57-58.

The Vienna uprising galvanised the revolutionary forces in other cities of Austria; individual units of workers and peasants fought their way into the encircled capital during the October days.

In the meantime, reaction was bracing up for an assault on the revolutionary city. The 60,000-man army of Prince Alfred von Windischgrätz took up positions north of Vienna. On October 23 he presented the besieged city with an ultimatum: a total unconditional surrender, disbandment of all armed organisations, including the Academic Legion, suspension of all newspapers. The Reichstag deputies declared his actions illegal; at the same time, they continued their search for a compromise with the Emperor.

The workers bore the brunt of the battle against the counter-revolutionary forces advancing on Vienna. The defence forces were concentrated in the suburbs of Wieden, Fünfhaus and Sechshaus. The Hungarian troops coming to the aid of revolutionary Vienna were thrown back by Jelačić's army. On October 28 the government army besieging the city achieved decisive success.

According to an eyewitness account, in the most difficult hours of the defence of Vienna, the workers preserved their courage and presence of mind. On October 29 "people could be seen everywhere running on the streets in all directions; various rumours circulated"; contradictory orders added to the confusion and embarrassment. It looked like any resistance had ceased. "The workers alone were holding their ground; they were fighting staunchly, cursing for all they were worth, and shouting that they would kill anybody who would speak of a retreat." In the meantime, white flags of surrender were displayed in many windows in the petty-bourgeois neighbourhoods of the city. In the evening, the workers still continued to fight back. Having failed to receive reinforcements they began a gradual retreat to the central quarters. "I will never forget a worker, pale from his wounds, coming down Alsergasse," the same eyewitness goes on. "Sabre in hand, he carried a rifle on his shoulder, its barrel still hot; from time to time he looked back and exclaimed: 'It was all in vain! We were betrayed and sold out again!'"[1] On October 30, Vienna surrendered. During the last week of October about 500 defenders of the capital—mainly workers—were killed. Brutal reprisals followed. Thousands of people were arrested, and active defenders shot by a firing squad.

In the article "The Victory of Counter-Revolution in Vienna" Marx wrote of the shameful behaviour of the Viennese bourgeoisie, which was in fact an endless succession of treasons in the days of the fighting. The bourgeois units of the National Guard "in collusion with

[1] Adolf Pichler, *Das Sturmjahr. Erinnerungen aus den März- und Oktobertagen 1848*, Berlin W. 9. bei Meyer und Wunder Heimatverlag, 1903, S. 155-56, 159.

the imperial bandits fought against the proletariat and the Academic Legion". There was an exodus of bourgeois from Vienna when the fighting was still in progress. The bourgeois Frankfort Assembly also betrayed the insurgents. In the final analysis, the fall of revolutionary Vienna had been predetermined by the victory of the bourgeoisie over the Parisian insurgents in June.[1]

However, Marx went on, "in France it won its victory in order to humble the people. In Germany it humbled itself to prevent the victory of the people. History presents no more *shameful and pitiful spectacle* than that of the *German bourgeoisie*."[2]

In December 1848 the government banned the democratic and workers' unions. The draft of a new Constitution published in March 1849 provided for a two-chamber parliament, a property qualification, and executive powers vested in the Emperor who was also authorised to veto chamber decisions. Lombardy, Venice, Czechia, and Hungary were proclaimed Austria's crown lands. The Reichstag was dissolved.

By that time only revolutionary Hungary continued its resistance. It was not until July and August 1849 that the revolution was finally stamped out by the joint efforts of Austrian and tzarist troops.

In 1849 and 1850 reforms enacted in the Austrian Empire abolished, in particular, feudal obligations for compensation, as well as the system of manorial courts.

Thus, although the revolution was defeated, one of its results was that the reactionary government was compelled to agree to a partial abolition of feudal obligations. Oppressed by the feudal order, the peasants of Austria and other regions of the Habsburg Empire achieved favourable changes in their position not only by their own actions; these changes were largely the result of the selfless struggle of the Viennese workers.

The political role of the working class in the revolution of 1848 in Austria was largely similar to that played by the proletarians in other German states, for example, in Prussia. The Viennese workers were the main mass force of the revolution; by their determined actions they pushed the revolution forward; it was to their courage and revolutionary energy that the Austrian revolution owed its most significant achievements. Taking part in the revolution jointly with the students and petty-bourgeois intellectuals, the workers repeatedly rose against the reactionary government (in March, May, August, October).

The political behaviour of the Austrian workers, however, had a specific pattern of its own. In Prussia and the small German states

---

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 503.
[2] Ibid., p. 504.

the workers succeeded in setting up a network of their own unions and even national organisation of proletarians during the revolution. In Austria this did not happen. Throughout 1848 the workers of Vienna were directly involved in revolutionary battles but they were still unorganised. During all these months, however, they were allied with the revolutionary students, who attempted to act as the political leader of the workers' movement.

The polarisation of the social and political forces in Austria followed a pattern different from that in Prussia and other German states, where the workers were faced by a common front of the feudal counter-revolution and the liberal bourgeoisie, while the petty bourgeoisie was wavering, and from that in Paris where the workers were opposed to all bourgeois classes. In Vienna the bourgeois also allied themselves with the feudal aristocracy in the struggle against the workers; however, the special characteristics of the numerous Viennese students—their political activity and close ties with the people—had the result that the bulk of the students, side by side with the workers, fought against the joint forces of counter-revolution. The specific situation in which the Viennese proletariat had to act in 1848 was also determined by the fact that though it lacked the experience of class struggle, of armed battles, of independent political actions, the proletariat found itself in the focus of revolutionary events following in rapid succession. Unable either to lead the revolution or to act as a politically independent revolutionary contingent, reposing their trust first in the bourgeois and then in the petty-bourgeois democratic leaders, the Viennese proletarians constituted, nevertheless, the largest and most battleworthy force of the revolution.

The developments in the Austrian capital were closely interconnected with the liberation movements in Italy, Czechia, Hungary and other countries under the sway of the Habsburg Empire. By its selfless struggle the Austrian proletariat, which was largely concentrated in Vienna, rendered important assistance to the liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples.

The March revolution in Vienna stirred an upsurge of the workers' movement in the capital of *Czechia*. On March 11, 1848 the local secret society "Ripil" affiliating members of the radical petty bourgeoisie and students convened the so-called Svjato-Waclav Assembly. Its organisers sought to involve in its deliberations as many workers as possible. The Assembly drew up a petition to the Emperor, demanding progressive political reforms, abolition of feudal obligations, "organisation of work and remuneration". The Prague radicals insisted, in particular, on universal armament of the people. The revolutionary movement in Czechia rose to a high pitch after the popular resentment in Vienna had compelled the Emperor's court to

escape to Innsbruck. The workers' actions became ever more determined. In April, the workers of the textile factory of Prszibram in Prague requested the authorities to reduce the working day to 10 hours in winter and 12 hours in summer. They were supported by their comrades at other enterprises. As a result, in the spring of 1848 the working day in the Prague textile industry was somewhat shortened. In May and June printers and textile workers in Prague went on strike to back their claim to a wage raise; incidents in a Luddite spirit also took place.

On May 20, Prince Windischgrätz appointed commander of the Prague garrison arrived in the Czech capital. He ordered troops to be concentrated in the city. The streets of Prague were continually patrolled by soldiers. On June 7, Prince Windischgrätz held a review of the garrison units, which was, in effect, a demonstration of strength. The Prince took the victories won by the Austrian army over the liberation movement in Italy as a signal for reaction to launch an offensive also in the lands of the Empire where he had the powers, in fact, of a military vicegerent.

On June 9 the Prague students demanded the removal of the artillery trained on the city. The land President Count von Thun applied to the bourgeois National Guard for aid. The radicals in turn requested support from the clothes factory workers, calico-printers and other working men who were on strike at the time. When Windischgrätz rejected the demands of the radicals, the people of Prague turned out in force for a demonstration in which the students and workers played the key role. The demonstrators demanded that Windischgrätz be removed and troops pulled out of the city. A crowd of demonstrators marched on Windischgrätz's palace where the guards opened fire on them. This was a spark that set off an uprising. The workers, students, petty townsfolk started to build barricades: there were a few hundred of them towards evening. The defenders of the barricades put up a dogged fight, but Windischgrätz had an enormous superiority in manpower and arms: he had under his command an excellently-armed 40,000-man army with powerful artillery. On June 13, the liberals offered to mediate between the belligerents. Windischgrätz promised to suspend hostilities if the insurgents pull down the barricades. The latter's leaders refused to cease fire and demanded the immediate removal of Windischgrätz, withdrawal of the bulk of troops from the city and the formation of a Provisional Government responsible to the people.

On June 14, Windischgrätz ordered bombardment of Prague, which was resumed on the next day. On June 16 he presented the insurgents with an ultimatum: to destroy the barricades and lay down their arms. On June 17 the resistance of the city defenders was broken. This was followed by a reign of terror unleashed by reaction.

Marx and Engels, who paid keen attention to the national liberation of the oppressed peoples in the years of the revolution, regarded the uprising of the people of Prague, in which the workers were the most active fighters, as one of the most crucial revolutionary events of the time. In the article "The Democratic Character of the Uprising" (June 24, 1848) Engels laid bare the slander circulated by the German chauvinists to the effect that the Prague uprising served the interests of "reaction, the aristocracy, the Russians, etc.". Engels described these allegations as "downright lies". Their authors, he wrote, "failed to notice the mass of the people of Bohemia—the numerous industrial workers and the peasants. The fact that at one moment the aristocracy tried to use the Czech movement in its own interests and those of the camarilla at Innsbruck, was regarded by them as evidence that the revolutionary proletariat of Prague, who, already in 1844, held full control of Prague for three days, represented the interests of the nobility and reaction in general." In Engels' words, the uprising was "decidedly democratic". "It was so definitely democratic that all Czechs belonging to the aristocratic party shunned it. It was aimed as much against the Czech feudal lords as against the Austrian troops. The Austrians attacked the people not because they were Czechs, but because they were *revolutionaries*."[1] Engels indicated prophetically that for the military the storming of Prague was simply a prologue to be followed by "the storming and burning down of Vienna".[2]

In 1848 and 1849, *Italy* became the scene of a broad revolutionary liberation movement. As regards its socio-economic content, the liberation movement of the Italian people in that period was a bourgeois revolution: its main objectives were to abolish the country's political fragmentation and the survivals of feudalism. At that time, no organised working-class movement existed in the Italian states. It was not before 1848 that an organisation of printers was set up in Turin with the object of organising strikes, but it was quite short-lived. However, in periods of a revolutionary tide and an upsurge of the national liberation struggle the Italian workers (mainly workmen of artisan workshops and manufactories) were in the front ranks of the fighters.

On March 17, 1848, after news of a revolution in Vienna and the fall of Metternich had spread throughout the Kingdom of Lombardy and Venice, people in Milan and Venice revolted against Austrian rule. In working out the plan of an uprising the leader of the popular movement in Venice, Daniele Manin, fully relied on the local civil guard and the Arsenal workers. The latter seized the Arsenal, and

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 119.
[2] Ibid.

opened its gates to the civil guard led by Manin. On the same day, a republic was proclaimed in Venice.

In the meantime, the people of Milan were engaged in fierce fighting against the Austrian garrison for five days at a stretch. On March 18, posters on the house walls announced the constitutional concessions made by Emperor Ferdinand. The news of the revolution in Vienna triggered off a popular uprising. On March 19 there were 1,600 barricades in the city. On March 22, the municipal council proclaimed itself a Provisional Government. Towards evening, the Austrian army under Field Marshal Radetzky was forced to withdraw from the city. From Milan the uprising spread to other cities of Lombardy. The fighting in Milan and Venice marked the beginning of the Italian people's war of liberation, which lasted until the middle of 1849. The people's movement was organised by the bourgeois republicans and the democrats; however, the local working people provided massive support for the insurgents in the cities. Workers of manufactories and artisan workshops took an active part in the revolutionary events everywhere.[1]

The workers took a most active part in the revolutionary events in *Hungary*. Here the revolution, just as in Italy, took the form of a war of national liberation against Austrian rule. The Hungarian proletarians also advanced their own specific demands, for democratic reforms in particular. The political programme of the working-class movement in Hungary in 1848 was formulated in the appeal "Bread for the People" (April 22), which expressed the interests of the apprentices and journeymen. They demanded immediate abolition of the guild system to enable the working people to pursue any trade; nationalisation of church and monastery property; a reduction in the numbers of "priest idlers"; termination of the payment of a share of the country's national income to the Austrian government to use the sums saved thereby for aid to the unemployed poor; distribution of vacant land among them without compensation; a progressive reform of the judicial system; a lowering of high food prices, primarily for salt. The slogan of consistent struggle against the enemies of the revolution held a prominent place in this document.[2] This document shows that in 1848 the nascent working-class movement belonged to the democratic wing of the anti-Habsburg front,

[1] The lumpen-proletarian strata played a fundamentally different role in the revolution of 1848-1849 in Italy. On May 14-15, 1848, when an uprising against King Ferdinand II broke out in Naples, the local lazzarone—vagrants, beggers, the declassed elements—came to the aid of the royal forces and helped them to defeat the insurgents. That was one of the first victories for the counter-revolution in Italy.

[2] See R. A. Averbukh, *The Revolution and National Liberation Struggle in Hungary. 1848-1849*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 121-22 (in Russian).

put forward a number of progressive political and social demands, in particular those directly related to the daily needs of the apprentices and journeymen, all working people.

ENGLAND IN 1848: THE LAST UPSURGE OF THE MASS CHARTIST MOVEMENT

Early in 1848 the movement for the Charter began to swell again in England. The economic crisis of 1847 and unemployment that came in its wake caused a sharp deterioration in the condition of the working class. Ireland was hit by famine. Just as before, the Chartist movement concentrated in the industrial cities of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

In the latter half of November 1847 the Executive Committee of the National Charter Association appealed for a campaign to be launched in favour of the third petition. The February events of 1848 in Paris galvanised the Chartist movement. Three massive Chartist rallies on February 28 and 29 and on March 2 adopted an address to the people of Paris, which said in particular: "We hasten to express to you our congratulations, and to thank you for glorious service you have rendered to the human race. By your courage and magnanimity, your heroism and devotion to principle, you have consecrated the sacred right of insurrection; the last resource of the oppressed—the last argument against oppression."[1] In March the country was swept by a wave of meetings. Republican slogans circulated more and more widely among the Chartists. Leaders of the left wing of the Chartist movement, headed by the revolutionary democrats Harney and Jones, were especially persistent in disseminating republican views.

On April 4, 1848 the third Chartist Convention was opened. The statements of its delegates reflected the growing revolutionary sentiments of the workers. O'Connor, who remained the acknowledged leader of the Chartist Movement, presumed that a mass demonstration at the time of submitting the petition would put the necessary pressure on Parliament and compel it to accept the Charter. Harney, on the contrary, believed that an armed struggle was inevitable. At the same time, a large proportion of the Convent delegates, including those who in 1842 had taken up an uncompromising attitude to the bourgeoisie, now in 1848 mistakenly assumed that the latter could be won over to the side of the Charter. The reason was that in recent years the bourgeoisie had made certain concessions to the workers (which were wrested from it by the real threat of a new rise in the mass movement): in 1847 Parliament had approved a bill on the 10-hour working day.

[1] *The Northern Star*, March 4, 1848, p. 1.

A Chartist demonstration with the object of submitting the petition to Parliament was to be held on April 10. The official press aided by organs of the bourgeoisie intensively circulated rumours about revolutionary disturbances allegedly being prepared in London. The government pulled army units into London. Already on April 8, troops from Windsor, Chichester, Chatham, Winchester, and Dover arrived in London along with batteries of heavy artillery. Upwards of 70,000 residents of the capital enlisted in the force of "special constables" (a bourgeois militia of its own kind) who safeguarded "law and order" in London on April 10. The government and the bourgeoisie feared being taken by surprise, as it had been the case during the Chartist general strike in 1842.[1]

In the morning of April 10, the Chartist Convention went into session. O'Connor who took the floor declared that if the government forbade the procession, he would ask the people not to hold it. According to a report in *The Northern Star*, O'Connor said he was prepared "to ask the meeting, in the name of courage, in the name of justice, in the name of God, not to hold the meeting ... and give the government an opportunity of attacking them."[2] O'Connor's statement met with no objections from the Convention, its most revolutionary wing in particular.

A crowd of about 100,000 Chartists assembled in front of the Parliament building on Kennington Common. Convinced that the government would not stop at the use of force, O'Connor pleaded with the Chartists to go home. "For, if we resisted the government, we should only afford them cause for censuring us," he said. Jones was the next to speak. "Recollect, that I am what is called a physical force Chartist, and that I have not shrunk from coming here today. But, my friends, it is useless to attempt, peaceable men as we are, a collision. We have, however, gained one point. We have held our meeting. That is sufficient to satisfy our honour—and we won't damage our success by an act of rash folly."[3] The Convention unanimously agreed with O'Connor and Jones. It took, in effect, a unanimous decision to call off the demonstration, motivating it by the need to deny the government a chance to massacre a great mass of unarmed workers. The workers approved of this decision. The petition was submitted to Parliament, which turned it down, just as the two others before it.

It would be wrong to blame O'Connor for the defeat suffered by Chartism in 1848. His stand remained unchanged from 1842. Then, however, it could be hoped that a threat of coercion alone could force

---

[1] *The Northern Star*, April 15, 1848, p. 6.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., p. 7.

the ruling classes to make a major political concession to the working people. In 1848 the situation was cardinally different. All the energy of England's ruling classes and their government apparatus was concentrated on resistance to the Chartists; in such a situation an unarmed demonstration, however large and formidable-looking, had no chance of success. To lead 100,000 unarmed workers to Parliament where they were being expected with intent to provoke a conflict would mean to expose them to a hail of bullets. By persuading the workers to call off the demonstration O'Connor by no means frustrated it by his interference; his conduct reflected the actual level of the political awareness of the Chartist movement, which was losing its massive membership and self-confidence in 1848.

The setback of April 10 was followed by a rapid disintegration of the basis of Chartism within the masses. The sections of the working class which were more or less well off began to abandon it (the petty bourgeois had completely broken with it even earlier). By that time it had become obvious that this nationwide movement of the working class had never had a clearcut programme of action. Early in 1848, in the conditions of the developing European revolution the Chartists were faced by these alternatives: either to give up revolutionary action altogether or to go ahead with it, though not as in 1842, but by giving a determined and, if necessary, a bloody battle to the bourgeoisie.

In 1848, no revolutionary situation existed in England: part of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution had been accomplished; therefore, England with its advanced working class was the only country in bourgeois Europe where the proletarians had no occasion to take part in a democratic revolution.

The experience of European revolutions showed that the level of the revolutionary energy of the working class is determined not only by the degree of its awareness of its own class objectives but also by the magnitude of the democratic tasks facing the country, which history makes it incumbent on the proletariat to accomplish.

Marx wrote of the 10th of April events: "Who does not remember the impression made by this first proof that the movement which had broken out was not unconquerable!"[1] April 10 in London, May 15 and June 25 in Paris, August 6 in Milan, November 1 in Vienna—such are the five red-letter days of European counter-revolution, the five milestones marking the quick stages of its recent triumphant march. In Marx's view, on April 10 European reaction succeeded in winning two important victories: on that day "not only was the revolutionary might of the Chartists *broken* ... but the *revolutionary*

[1] Karl Marx, "The Revolutionary Movement in Italy", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 102.

propaganda impact of the February victory was also for the first time *broken*."[1] Thus, Marx placed on a par the calling off by the Chartists of a mass demonstration on April 10, the fall of revolutionary Vienna, the capture of Milan by Austrian troops, the defeat of the Parisian proletariat in a fierce four-day battle. The motives for such presentation of the question are obvious. Considering the English proletariat the most advanced, the best-organised and the most massive contingent of the European working class, Marx and Engels hoped that its vigorous interference in the revolutionary process in Europe (they regarded individual revolutions as components of an all-European movement) would decisively contribute to victory of the revolutionary cause.

After the bloodless defeat of the mass Chartist movement its revolutionary wing assumed a more clearcut outline. The left wing of the Chartists led by Harney and Jones came close to assimilating the ideas of scientific socialism. However, as Engels wrote later, "a very few people" had an idea, however vague, of the direction to follow in search of liberation.[2]

* * *

As history shows, the development of Marxist ideas follows a particularly intensive and fruitful course when stimulated by revolutionary impulses; a revolution raises problems to which Marxism, as a concentrated ideological expression of the interests of the most revolutionary class, gives answers based on a neat arrangement of arguments. The history of social science is inseparably bound up with the actual history of mankind; in this sense revolutions, which generate powerful ideological impulses, also act as locomotives of history. Marxism, which has digested new historical experience and thereby enriched itself, is increasingly winning the minds of the proletarians, who are advancing towards the next decisive confrontation with the exploitative system; thus, its own experience comes back, as it were, to the working class, and equips it with a more advanced theory. The awakening of the proletarian masses, which in periods of the greatest exacerbation of the class struggle handle many practical problems "in the Marxist way" is largely due to the daily work of the Marxists, who seek to explain to the working people the lessons of their own history.

"His theory," Lenin wrote, "is *a summing up of experience*, illuminated by a profound philosophical conception of the world and a

---

[1] Ibid., p. 101.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 191.

rich knowledge of history."[1] After the defeat of the revolution, Marx and Engels made a profound analysis primarily of the revolution itself—the laws and mechanism of the class struggle, the circumstances which had caused the all-European cataclysm and those which had led to the triumph of reaction.

Far from coming to power at that time, the European proletariat even failed to secure by its power a victory for the bourgeois-democratic revolution, which might have opened a socialist perspective before it. At the same time, however, the revolution of 1848 in France and in the German states—the main theatres of revolutionary action—demonstrated that here the working class concentrated the greater part of society's revolutionary energy for the first time in history. It came forward as a politically active, as the most massive and determined force. What is more, at the climax of the revolutionary development in France the Parisian workers made a giant leap forward towards their independence as a class. It was precisely the mass actions of the proletariat in the revolutions of 1848-1849 that determined in the final analysis the political behaviour of the bourgeois classes. Even in those countries where the proletariat was still in its early formative stage and did not yet operate as an active socio-political factor, it left a plebeian imprint on revolutionary developments. In the vast panorama of popular movements, workers' revolts and wars of liberation of 1848 the features of a giant class became clearly outlined in the flames of popular enthusiasm. This class for the first time exerted a powerful influence on the course of developments and the destinies of all nations of Europe. It is significant that Marx, who often wrote of the grotesque character of the activities pursued by the "revolutionary leaders" of 1848, pointed out in his summing-up comparative description of the revolution of the late 18th century and the revolution of 1848, the prodigious historical progress the latter represented as compared with the former:

"Bourgeois revolutions, like those of the eighteenth century, storm swiftly from success to success; their dramatic effects outdo each other; men and things seem set in sparkling brilliants; ecstasy is the everyday spirit; but they are short-lived; soon they have attained their zenith, and a long crapulent depression lays hold of society before it learns soberly to assimilate the results of its storm-and-stress period. On the other hand, proletarian revolutions, like those of the nineteenth century, criticise themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin it afresh, deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltrinesses of their first attemtps, seem to throw down their adversary only in

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 412.

order that he may draw new strength from the earth and rise again, more gigantic, before them, recoil ever and anon from the indefinite prodigiousness of their own aims, until a situation has been created which makes all turning back impossible."[1]

[1] Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 401.

Chapter 8

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARXISM IN THE 1850s AND EARLY 1860s

THE ANALYSIS BY MARX AND ENGELS OF THE EXPERIENCE OF THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1848-1849. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORY OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNISM

The European revolutions of 1848-1849 were the first historical test of Marxism—the revolutionary theory of the proletariat. What was most important, they bore out the validity of the new theory. At the same time, the experience of the eighteen months of the revolutions showed the necessity of further development of this theory. Despite all hopes the revolutions were destroyed. The question of the prospects of the revolutionary movement assumed first priority.

After the defeat of the revolutions, Marx and Engels finally emigrated from Germany and settled in England. As it had more than once happened in the history of Marxism—before and after 1848—the impossibility to carry on active practical struggle in the sphere of politics compelled Marx and Engels to shift the emphasis in their revolutionary activities to theoretical research. Their creative work in the period 1850-1852 was devoted mainly to summing up the experience gained in the revolutions.[1] For this purpose, late in 1849 they made an attempt to resume the publication of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in the form of a journal under the same name: *Neue Rheinische Zeitung. Politisch-ökonomische Revue* (1850). The announcement of the new publication said: "A time of apparent calm such as the present must be employed precisely for the purpose of elucidating the period of revolution just experienced...."[2]

The experience of the revolutions was also summed up in a number of works by the founders of scientific communism, of which the most significant were two works of Marx—*The Class Struggles in France* (January-March 1850) and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of*

---

[1] A summarising study of this period in the history of Marxism is to be found in the monograph of T. I. Oizerman, *The Development of Marxist Theory Based on the Experience of the Revolution of 1848*, Moscow, 1955 (in Russian).

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "Announcement of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung. Politisch-ökonomische Revue*", *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 5.

Louis Bonaparte (December 1851-March 1852) and two works of Engels—*The Peasant War in Germany* (summer of 1850) and *The Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany* (August 1851-September 1852), as well as *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League* (March 1850). These works presented a further important development of Marxist theory.

The theoretical problems of Marxism were worked out on the basis and under the impression of recent revolutionary events in a situation of heated ideological debates within the Communist League. Serious differences of views came to light within it after the defeats of 1848. Part of its members withdrew from the revolutionary movement. Another part—the Schapper-Willich faction—came forward with an adventuristic plan to "enforce" a revolution in defiance of the circumstances. A struggle flared up between the followers of Marx and Engels, on the one hand, and this adventuristic faction, on the other. These differences came on the scene shortly after many active participants in the revolutionary movement had assembled in emigration in London, evidently not later than the winter of 1849-1850. The controversy centred on the problem of the prospects of revolution, but the answer to it depended on an understanding of the causes, conditions, and laws of the revolutionary process.

As far back as the period before the revolution the founders of scientific communism had concluded that the revolution was inevitable. They had shown the maturation of the objective and subjective prerequisites for the revolution and proved the necessity of a revolutionary settlement of the objective contradictions rending capitalist society. It would seem that the objective prerequisites for the beginning and successful development of the revolution in the advanced countries (England, France, and Germany)[1] had already matured. Why then was the revolution defeated in the end, a revolution that had begun so successfully, spread to a number of countries and become, in effect, international, as it had been presumed in theory, a revolution which culminated in a direct conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in Paris in June 1848? Was that finale a brief episode in the development of the revolutionary process? What were the further prospects of the revolutionary process and, accordingly, what strategy was a revolutionary party to follow in the prevailing situation?

These questions demanded an answer, and an objective answer for that matter rather than one simply expressing the sentiments of veterans of the revolution who had been forced to emigrate. Such a truly scientific and, hence, practically reliable answer could

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 351-52.

not be formulated exclusively on the basis of the existing theory, which had basically evolved before the revolution and passed its first test successfully. However, this theory alone could help clear up the prevailing situation. Thus, only the application of Marxist theory to an analysis of the past revolutionary period, as well as its further development could really help accomplish the task posed by all earlier history.

After the revolution of 1848-1849 Marxist theory developed along a few different, although interconnected lines: the application of the materialistic concept of history to an analysis of the revolutionary periods in the history of France and Germany, the economic foundation of bourgeois society and the art of war; a more profound study of the capitalist mode of production and the mechanism of the class struggle; greater attention to the subjective factor in history. In the period of summing up the experience of the revolution the founders of scientific communism naturally concentrated on the theory of revolution.

"*Revolutions are the locomotives of history*"—this is Marx's formula for one of his major theoretical conclusions.[1] Revolutions are the motive force, the boosters of historical progress. In time of a revolution historical development is sharply accelerated. Marx speaks of rapid development of revolution; Engels shows what makes a revolution such a "powerful agent of social and political progress", what makes a country where a revolution is in progress traverse within a brief space of time a path it would not have traversed in a century under ordinary conditions.[2] Later, elaborating on a similar idea of the irregularity of the historical process, Marx said in a letter to Engels that from the viewpoint of world history twenty years of routine development may mean not more than one day, and, conversely, "days may come again comprising twenty years".[3]

Earlier, that is, before the revolution of 1848, Marx and Engels had not specified their concepts regarding the duration of the forthcoming revolutionary process. Such concepts could be based at the time mainly on the historical experience of the French bourgeois revolution of the late 18th century. When the revolution of 1848 began, however, "there could be no doubt for us," as Engels said later, "under the circumstances then obtaining, that the great decisive combat had commenced, that it would have to be fought out in a single long and vicissitudinous period of revolution, but that it

---

[1] See Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 277.

[2] Frederick Engels, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 32.

[3] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 131; cf. V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 75.

could only end in the final victory of the proletariat."[1] Nevertheless, history showed the vulnerability of the concept that it was possible under the prevailing circumstances to lead the revolution to victory of the proletariat in the same breath. This concept followed from overestimation of the maturity of the contradictions plaguing bourgeois society, as well as from a definite underestimation of the complexity of the coming revolutionary process.

One result of the defeat of the revolution and the need to fight the adventuristic faction in the Communist League was a profound reconsideration of the prospects of revolutionary development. Now Marx and Engels specifically emphasised the long duration and complexity of the forthcoming revolutionary process. It was precisely to this aspect that they constantly called attention in their public statements. For instance, in the winter of 1849-1850, reading lectures about *The Communist Manifesto* in the London German Worker's Educational Association, Marx expressed the idea that the revolutionary transition from the existing to a communist society would be a long and phased process. These were probably the first repercussions of the ideological controversy within the Communist League. After some time, in the third chapter (written in March 1850 and published in mid-April) of *The Class Struggles in France* Marx, elaborating on the ideas he had earlier formulated in *The German Ideology* (the international character of communist revolution, revolution as a dual process of change in circumstances and change in individuals), emphasised that the proletarian revolution "...is no short-lived revolution. The present generation," he explained, invoking a biblical theme, "is like the Jews whom Moses led through the wilderness. It has not only a new world to conquer, it must go under in order to make room for the men who are able to cope with a new world."[2]

Marx forcefully emphasised the complexity of the future revolutionary transformation at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist League on September 15, 1850, opposing the petty-bourgeois phrase-mongers and adventurers (the faction of Willich and Schapper): "The point of view of the minority is dogmatic instead of critical, idealistic instead of materialistic. They regard not the real conditions but a *mere effort of will* as the driving force of the revolution. Whereas we say to the workers: 'You will have to go through 15, 20, 50 years of civil wars and national struggles not only to bring about a change in society but also to change yourselves, and prepare yourselves for the exercise of 'political power',

[1] Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France" (Engels' preface), Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 189.

[2] Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 117.

you say on the contrary: 'Either we seize power at once, or else we might as well just take to our beds.' "[1]

This statement is conclusive proof that already at that time, in view of the experience of the revolution of 1848-1849, Marx had a realistic idea of the duration, complexity, and contradictory character of the future revolutionary remaking of society. A year later, completing his work *The Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*, Engels wrote in the same vein: "A more signal defeat than that undergone by the continental revolutionary ... parties ... cannot be imagined. But what of that? Has not the struggle of the British middle classes for their social and political supremacy embraced forty-eight, that of the French middle classes forty years of unexampled struggles?"[2]

As Marx showed somewhat later in his work *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, the duration and complexity of the coming revolutionary process were largely determined by the specific character of the proletarian revolution, its fundamental distinction from bourgeois revolutions, the unprecedented tasks it was to accomplish; hence, its fundamental character and intrinsic self-criticism.[3]

A profound understanding of the duration and complexity of an impending revolution may be regarded as a kind of forecasting the quantitative aspect of the process. Marx and Engels, however, went much farther than that: they laid the groundwork for a true comprehension of its qualitative aspect as well. Summing up the recent historical experience, they worked up to classical perfection their conception of a continuous revolution, whose first formulations had appeared in Engels' works *The Communists and Karl Heinzen* and *Principles of Communism*. This conception was worked out in detail in *The Class Struggles in France* and especially in *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League*.

In the latter document Marx and Engels summed up the experience of the German revolution and made some forecasts. After the March revolution of 1848 the power was seized by the liberal big bourgeoisie. The workers were their allies in struggle. To suppress the workers' movement, the bourgeois allied themselves with the feudals and eventually surrendered their power to them. The *Address* was based on the assumption that "a new revolution is

---

[1] Karl Marx, "Revelations Concerning the Communist Trial in Cologne", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, pp. 402-03; cf. also Vol. 10, pp. 625-29.

[2] Frederick Engels, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 5.

[3] Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, pp. 106-07; cf. also pp. 184-85.

impending"[1] (within half-a-year, however, its authors realised that this forecast lacked adequate basis in fact). The revolution would establish the rule of petty-bourgeois democracy. Only after the democratic-minded petty bourgeois came to power could a direct struggle begin for the political rule of the proletariat.

Developing this conception, Marx and Engels formulated the idea of a continuous revolution in its classical form: "While the democratic petty bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible ... it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, the proletariat has conquered state power, and the association of proletarians, not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world, has advanced so far that competition among the proletarians in these countries has ceased and that at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in the hands of proletarians. For us the issue cannot be the alteration of private property but only its annihilation, not the smoothing over of class antagonisms but the abolition of classes, not the improvement of the existing society but the foundation of a new one."[2] This was followed by an analysis of the following three stages: the period *prior* to the impending revolution, the period of revolutionary struggle *itself*; and the period *after* the revolution when the democratic petty bourgeois come to power. Under pressure from the proletariat they will be compelled to propose "more or less socialist measures". At the outset of the movement, the workers cannot, of course, demand the enforcement of "directly communist measures". Their militant slogan, however, should read: "The Revolution in Permanence."[3]

What meaning did the founders of scientific communism attach to the notion of continuous revolution? The future communist remaking of society is not a single act but a long-lasting process. Its ultimate aim is communist society. This is a process which runs its course through a number of developmental phases. At the same time, periods of direct struggle for power may alternate with periods of relative stability, but the latter are relatively short (this suggests an idea of the revolution developing from one stage into another). The power is consecutively taken over by different classes until the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat, which means a transition to a classless, communist society. The revolution has also an international character, occurring as a common interrelated process in the most advanced countries. Prior to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat this revolutionary process

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 278.
[2] Ibid., p. 281.
[3] Ibid., pp. 286-87.

may last as long as several decades and even half-a-century. This was how the founders of scientific communism visualised the revolutionary process—a process of continuous revolution—in general outline.

Later, Lenin highly assessed the idea of continuous revolution and used it to substantiate his conception of the development of the bourgeois-democratic into a socialist revolution and to lay down the basic principles of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary Marxist party determined by this process.

In its content and direction this idea is radically opposed to the slogan of "permanent revolution" with which falsifiers of the Marxist doctrine tried and are trying to substitute it, referring, without justification, to Marx. At one time, Trotsky, advertising this slogan, challenged the principle of continuity of the revolutionary process and advanced the adventuristic scheme of progress by leaps over its developmental stages. He also invoked "permanent revolution" to deny the possibility of building socialism in one country, which in the prevailing situation was tantamount to an appeal for the restoration of capitalism in Soviet Russia. The idea of "permanent revolution" is also alluded to by today's ultra-left theoreticians denying the necessity of an objective revolutionary situation as the key prerequisite for a successful revolution.

The Maoists present an even more grotesque interpretation of the idea of "permanent revolution". Having fully embraced the Trotskyite variety of "permanent revolution", they are using it, in addition, to justify the purge of sound proletarian forces opposed to Maoism in the PRC, as well as to cover up the squabbles between degenerate rival cliques. Accordingly, any new purge or a wave of repression is depicted as a new stage in the "permanent revolution".

In the early 1850s Marx also developed some very essential aspects of the theory of future communist society. Many new documents referring to the history of the Communist League have been discovered and published during the last few years. Of immense interest is the testimony of Peter Gerhardt Röser, one of the leaders of the Communist League in Cologne and a defendant at the Cologne trial of Communists in 1852. Late in 1853 and early in 1854 Röser gave additional testimony during his interrogation at the Moabit prison where he was serving his term.

This document gives a graphic idea of the character of the activities of the first international communist organisation. Bearing in mind the conditions in which Röser was at that time, one should, of course, take a critical view of the facts he adduced in his testimony (he deliberately distorted some of them). On the whole, however, they appear trustworthy.

The most important facts are reported in the testimony given

on December 31, 1853: "At the end of July (1850.—*Author.*)[1] the grinder Wilhelm Klein returned from London to Germany.... He arrived in Cologne ... and brought me a letter from Marx, in which the latter wrote angrily about Willich and Co. and expressed his profound regret over Schapper's support for their absurd fabrications. He wrote that during the winter of 1849-1850 he had lectured on the *Manifesto* at the London German Worker's Educational Association. In these lectures he expounded the idea that communism can be established only after the expiry of a few years, that it should go through several phases and in general can be established only through enlightenment and general development; Willich with his yesmen—as Marx called them—charply objected to him, declaring that communism would be introduced during the coming revolution, but, it is true, with the aid of the guillotine. Marx reported that the hostility between them had gone so far that he feared a split in the League, because that "General", Willich, and his undaunted Pfältz henchmen were obsessed with an idea to introduce communism during the coming revolution at their own risk even against the will of all Germany."[2]

Marx's letter has not survived, so we have to rely exclusively on Röser's testimony.

Three days later, on January 3, 1854, Röser went back to the contents of Marx's letter in his testimony: "Finally, I want to note again the accusation made against us that both parties, the party of Marx and the party of Schapper, equally seek to establish communism. However, the two parties have become bitter opponents, even enemies over the question of how to establish communism. Schapper and Willich want to introduce communism under present conditions and, if necessary, by force of arms during the coming revolution. Marx, however, thinks that communism can be established only through enlightenment and progressive development; in one of his letters to us he indicated four phases communism must go through before it is fully established. He says that at the present time as long as the revolution is pending the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat are jointly struggling against royal authority. This revolution will not be accomplished by them from above, it follows from the existing relations and is generated by general want. The periodically recurring trade crises accelerate the advent

[1] In this point Röser is inaccurate, probably deliberately. W. Klein, a member of the Communist League, arrived in Cologne on June 16, 1850. (See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 27, S. 538; *The Communist League—Predecessor of the First International*, Collection of documents, Moscow, 1964, pp. 283, 405-06; *Marx and Engels and the First Proletarian Revolutionaries*, Moscow, 1961, pp. 210-11, 501.

[2] *International Review of Social History*, Volume IX—1964, Part I, Royal Van Gorcum Ltd. Assen, Amsterdam, pp. 98-99.

of the revolution. It is only after the forthcoming revolution when the petty bourgeois come to power that the true activities and opposition of the Communists will begin."

Everything that Röser reported so far—except the indication of the *four phases* and his deliberate exaggeration of the role of "enlightenment", etc.—is generally known and conveys the views of Marx and Engels with sufficient clarity. Further, however, he says something quite new: "This will be followed by a social republic, and the latter by a social-communist republic, which will eventually give place to a purely communist republic."[1]

Thus, according to Röser's testimony, Marx believed then that "*communism*", that is, the process of a communist remaking of society, the transition from the existing to a purely communist society "*must go through several phases*" or, more specifically, "four phases" before full communism is established. Consequently, considering the latter, Marx envisaged *five phases* of the future revolutionary process in Germany. After a critical analysis of Röser's testimony and its comparison with the entire range of relevant views held by Marx and Engels known to us from their own works and letters, as well as from other reliable documentary sources, these five phases may be defined as follows: (1) the period prior to the coming revolution which will establish government of the democratic petty bourgeois; (2) a democratic republic; (3) a social republic; (4) a social-communist republic; (5) a purely communist republic.

According to the conception of the March *Address*, "more or less socialist measures" must be implemented already in the phase of a democratic republic. Evidently, however, a programme of transitional, socialist measures can be implemented in full only in the next phase where the proletariat is the class in power. Marx and Engels describe this third phase—a social republic—as a "Republic with socialist tendencies"[2], i.e., as a phase of transition to socialism. By analogy with the latter one tends to assume that the next, fourth phase—a social-communist republic—is "a Republic with communist tendencies", that is, a phase in which measures are implemented for transition to full communism—the fifth phase, a purely communist republic. The latter two phases—the fourth and the fifth—may to a certain extent be identified with socialism and communism.

Is it probable, however, that as far back as 1850 Marx differentiated between socialism and communism as the two phases in the develop-

[1] *International Review of Social History*, Volume IX—1964, Part I, pp. 115-16.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 224; Vol. 2, p. 219; Marx/Engels, *Werke*, 1968, Bd. 17, S. 554; Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 235.

ment of future society? May one trust Röser's testimony? Yes, absolutely.

This conclusion follows from a critical analysis of his evidence which is basically true. His description of the conception of several phases in the development of the revolutionary process agrees well with what is definitely known of the views of Marx and Engels. This conception partly coincides with, and partly supplements, the scheme of a continuous revolution in the March *Address*. As regards this supplementing part the following two conjectures are possible: either the worker Röser invented what merits to be called a fully Marxist conception or he conveyed the views of Marx more or less authentically. The former is practically improbable, the latter, by all indications, is more than plausible.

This conclusion is corroborated by an analysis of all earlier changes in the views Marx and Engels had of the process of the development of future society. This analysis reveals that already the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of Marx contained in embryo a differentiation between the two phases of future communist society; that in *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels laid the solid theoretical groundwork for differentiation between its three formative stages (the transition period and the two phases of communism); that in *Principles of Communism* Engels comes close to differentiation between socialism and communism as two successive stages in the evolution of this society. As is known, even the forerunners of scientific communism had made conjectures regarding the two developmental phases of future society.

Thus, one of the most important theoretical achievements of Marx and Engels in the period after the revolution of 1848-1849 was the conception of phases of the future revolutionary process, the formative phases of future communist society.

The evolvement of the general theory of revolution, the study of the stage character of the revolutionary process led Marx and Engels to a number of concrete theoretical conclusions. They presented them in their works of 1850-1852. For instance, as early as March 1850 in *The Class Struggles in France* Marx coined the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" expressing in the most adequate way the principal idea of the Marxist political doctrine.[1] Simultaneously, in the very same third chapter of this work he formulated the principal economic demand of the Communists: socialisation of the means of production. Engels calls attention to this fact in the introduction he wrote for it in 1895: "What, besides, gives our work quite special significance is the circumstance

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, pp. 227, 254, 282; Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 614.

that it was the first to express the formula in which, by common agreement, the workers' parties of all countries in the world briefly summarise their demand for economic transformation: the appropriation of the means of production by society.... Thus, here, for the first time, the proposition is formulated by which modern workers' socialism is equally sharply differentiated both from all the different shades of feudal, bourgeois, petty bourgeois, etc.. socialism and also from the confused community of goods of utopian and of spontaneous workers' communism."[1]

Not the abolition of private property in general, not simply common or social property but the abolition of private ownership of the means of production—such is a scientifically accurate definition of the main economic demand of the communist party. In the same spirit, already in *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels had specified in effect the communist demand for abolishing private property. Now, in *The Class Struggles in France* Marx made it concrete both in essence and form. In the period following the Paris Commune the demand for socialisation of the means of production became one of the main points in the programmes of the emerging socialist workers' parties.

The process of socialisation of private property, just as the entire revolutionary process, must also go through different stages. This idea is reflected in Engels' article "The English Ten Hours' Bill" written in March 1850: "The first consequence of the proletarian revolution in England will be the centralisation of large-scale industry in the hands of the state, that is, the ruling proletariat...."[2] Here, Engels directly draws on a well-known provision in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*[3], but now he specifies it. Yes, indeed, the proletariat will have to centralise *step by step* all the means of production; however, the *first result* of the proletarian revolution will be centralisation of *large-scale industry* in the hands of the state. And this is for the simple reason that it is precisely in large-scale industry that production assumes a social character and has become incompatible with private property.

The law-governed and phasic character of the revolutionary process also conditions the objective tasks facing the proletariat in the revolution. As far back as the pre-revolutionary times Marx and Engels drew the conclusion that Germany *was on the eve of a bourgeois* revolution, but a German bourgeois revolution could

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 188.

[2] Frederick Engels, "The English Ten Hours' Bill", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 300.

[3] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", op. cit., Vol. 6, p. 504.

only be the immediate prelude to proletarian revolution.[1] From this followed the specific tactics of combining the struggle for democracy with a struggle for communist transformation of society. Therefore, in the period of 1848-1849 Marx and Engels as representatives of the revolutionary proletariat joined the radical left flank of the democratic movement. The experience of 1848-1849 revealed that the German bourgeoisie was unable to play the leading role in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. In the new historical situation this role was to be assumed by the proletariat. Objectively, the next stage in the revolutionary process could only be a bourgeois-democratic revolution. The proletariat was destined to play the decisive part in it, but it was as yet unable to carry out directly its own, proletarian revolution.

In the summer and autumn of 1850 the ideological struggle in the Communist League over the question of the character of the future revolution sharply intensified. The positions of the antagonists became clearly outlined at the dramatic meeting of the Central Committee on September 15, which culminated in a split. Contrary to the well-known viewpoint of Marx, Schapper alleged in his statement that the proletariat must come to power in the very next revolution in Germany. Marx said in response: "If the proletariat were to come to power the measures it would introduce would be petty-bourgeois and not directly proletarian,"[2] because the objective content of the nearest stage of the revolution would be a struggle for a democratic republic.

The new historical situation—the need for a bourgeois-democratic revolution in the conditions of full-scale antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie—generated some specific circumstances. It was not unlikely in principle that power would be seized by representatives of the class which was to play the decisive part in the nearest stage of the revolutionary process but owing to objective circumstances was as yet unable to implement its own, specific programme while in power.

Later, reflecting on the prospects of a possible revolution in the relatively backward Germany, Engels with amazing foresight predicted the difficulties the revolutionary movement might probably encounter in such a situation. "I have a presentiment that," he wrote in a letter to J. Weydemeyer on April 12, 1853, "thanks to the perplexity and flabbiness of all the others, our Party will one fine morning be forced to take over the reigns of government and in the end to carry out measures that are not directly in our interest, but are in the general interests of the revolution and the

[1] Ibid., p. 519.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 628.

specific interests of the petty-bourgeoisie; on which occasion, driven by the proletarian populace, bound by our own printed declarations and plans—more or less falsely interpreted, more or less passionately thrust to the fore in the Party struggle—we shall be constrained to undertake communist experiments and perform leaps the untimeliness of which we know better than anyone else."[1]

The exacerbation of the struggle within the Communist League in 1850 made it a matter of urgency to find out the socio-economic roots of the revolutionary process, to cognise more profoundly the causes which generated the movement of 1848-1849 and the causes of the defeat of the revolution, as well as to forecast scientifically the conditions required for a new revolutionary upsurge.

Relying on materialistic interpretation of history, Marx and Engels analysed in the first place the class struggles in France and Germany as the actual content of the revolution. Behind all its decisive events, political and ideological battles they discerned a struggle between classes or their factions. They applied the historical materialistic method which Marx defined with utmost precision as a method of reduction to classes.[2] All this helped to generalise the experience of the revolution and stimulated the all-round development of the Marxist theory of classes and class struggle. On March 5, 1852, while completing *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx in a letter to J. Weydemeyer summed up the essence of his progress in this field as follows: "...As to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me the bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to demonstrate: 1) that the *existence of classes* is merely linked to *particular historical phases in the development of production*, 2) that class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*...."[3]

Proceeding from the first fundamental principle of the materialist theory of classes, according to which the class structure of society is based on a definite level of the development of material production, Marx did not confine himself to an analysis of the class struggle in the period of the European revolution. He went further. Even before the revolution, the founders of scientific communism had

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 628.
It is significant that in the early months of the New Economic Policy Lenin recalled this letter from Engels. (See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, p. 307.)
[2] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 31, S. 39.
[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 64.

established a definite connection between economic crises and social revolution.[1] Such general theoretical considerations had already led to the conclusion on the internal link between the economic crisis of 1847 and the outbreak of the revolution of 1848, between the economic growth that followed and the defeat of the revolution. As evidenced by Engels, in the spring of 1850 Marx resumed his economic research and, in the first place, concentrated on the economic history of the past decade. As a result, he clearly realised what he had guessed at half by *a priori* logic: the link between crisis and revolution.[2]

In the autumn, after the split in the Communist League Marx resumed his studies in political economy, which had been interrupted by the revolution. His in-depth analysis of the socio-economic root causes of the revolutionary process essentially deepened the concepts regarding the prospects of the revolution. Whereas in the spring Marx and Engels had still expected a new tide of the revolutionary movement in the near future, in the autumn of 1850, according to Engels, they discarded these illusions once and for all.[3] In the international review dated November 1, 1850, they formulated a major new conclusion drawn primarily from Marx's studies: "With this general prosperity, in which the productive forces of bourgeois society develop so luxuriantly as is at all possible within bourgeois relationships, there can be no talk of a real revolution. Such a revolution is only possible in the periods when *both these factors, the modern productive forces* and the *bourgeois forms of production*, come *in collision* with each other.... *A new revolution is possible only in the consequence of a new crisis. It is, however, just as certain as this crisis.*"[4]

When the first world economic crisis broke out in 1857 Marx really reposed in it his hopes for the outbreak of a new revolution. His hopes, however, were only partly justified: a new upswing of the working-class and revolutionary movement began, but it never culminated in a new revolutionary explosion. The link between crisis and revolution turned out to be more complicated than he had expected. Marx's further profound economic research in the *Capital* led to the evolvement of the scientific theory of crises and to a new revision of views on the correlation between crisis and revolution, to the solution of this problem. Hence the new accent

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 346-47, 489-90.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 179-80.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "Review, May to October [1850]", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 510.

in Marx's preface to his work *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859): "No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed...."[1]

Simultaneously with the research to specify the link between crisis and revolution, the founders of scientific communism carried out in the autumn of 1850, they arrived at the discovery of another crucially important new law of the revolutionary process. England was the most developed country in the bourgeois world, "the demiurge of the bourgeois cosmos". Why had the revolution broken out on the Continent and why was a new revolution to be expected also on the Continent? While crises generate revolutions primarily on the Continent, their cause nevertheless invariably lies in England. "*Violent outbreaks must naturally occur rather in the extremities of the bourgeois body than in its heart, since the possibility of adjustment is greater here than there.*"[2]

Herein lies the discovery of historical law according to which a revolutionary transformation of society, a process of transition to a new society, can begin on the periphery of the bourgeois social order.

Reflecting on the causes of the defeat of the revolution, Marx and Engels did not limit themselves to finding out the deep-seated economic root causes of historical events. They investigated the full range of these causes, including the social, class, political, and ideological factors. Thus it became more and more obvious that an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry was necessary for the revolution to be a success in countries with a large peasant population. The idea of such an alliance took shape in organic connection with the evolution of the Marxist conception of continuous revolution. Engels came close to this idea in his works *The Communists and Karl Heinzen* and *Principles of Communism*. "The industrial proletariat of the towns," he says in particular, "have become the vanguard of all modern democracy; the urban petty bourgeoisie and still more the peasants depend on its initiative completely."[3] The experience of the revolution, however, was of decisive importance. In the very same chapter of *The Class Struggles in France* which was written almost at the same time as the *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League* of March 1850 and which formulates the idea of continuous revolution,

---

[1] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1971, p. 21.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "Review, May to October [1850]", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 510.

[3] Frederick Engels, "The Communists and Karl Heinzen", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 295, 350; cf. Vol. 11, pp. 11-12.

Marx touched on the problem of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry.[1] In the first edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* published in 1852 he underscores that when the peasantry becomes an ally of the proletariat "*the proletarian revolution will obtain that chorus without which its solo becomes a swan song in all peasant countries.*"[2] On April 16, 1856, Marx wrote in a letter to Engels: "The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility of backing the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War. Then the affair will be splendid."[3]

Developing the concept of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, Marx and Engels put forward the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat, its leading role in relation to the peasantry. "Hence the peasants," Marx concludes in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* "find their natural ally and leader in the *urban proletariat*, whose task is the overthrow of the bourgeois order."[4] These ideas were an outstanding contribution to scientific communism. The initial statement of the fundamental fact that society was increasingly splitting up into two big classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—was inadequate for applying theory to the prevailing situation where even in the majority of developed countries the bulk of the population was constituted not by the proletariat alone but by the proletariat and the peasantry. The idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry with the proletariat playing the leading role in this alliance opened up the prospect of implementing successfully first a bourgeois-democratic and later a socialist revolution.

An analysis of the experience of 1848-1849 led Marx and Engels to establish one of the basic principles of the political doctrine of Marxism and Marxist theory of revolution—the conclusion on the need to demolish the old, bourgeois machinery of state. It had been prepared while the revolution was still in progress and was theoretically substantiated and classically formulated in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: "All revolutions perfected this machine instead of breaking it."[5] The experience of the revolution was not yet enough to take the next step in working out the problem "state and revolution"—to determine what the proletariat would have

[1] "Only the fall of capital can raise the peasant; only an anti-capitalist, a proletarian government can break his economic misery, his social degradation ... the *Red* republic, is the dictatorship of his allies." Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 122.

[2] Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 193.

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 86.

[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 191.

[5] Ibid., p. 186.

to substitute for the old state machine, what specific form of state would have to embody the dictatorship of the proletariat. No concrete meaning was yet attached to the very notion of "demolition"; which elements of the state machine must be destroyed and which could be preserved. Only the experience of the Paris Commune gave an answer to these questions. However, as far back as 1852 it was clear to Marx that the demolition of the old state machine would by no means amount to a decentralisation of society. In the first edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* Marx formulated this idea as follows: "The demolition of the state machine will not endanger centralisation. Bureaucracy is only the low and brutal form of a centralisation...." In the edition of 1869 he specified it: "The centralisation of the state that modern society requires arises only on the ruins of the military-bureaucratic government machinery."[1]

Summing up the experience of the past revolution, reflecting on the problems the future revolution might face, Marx and Engels put forward at that time a wide range of other ideas which constituted in the aggregate a powerful potential for further advancement of revolutionary theory. Some of them are: the need to regard an armed insurrection as an art, the idea of decisive actions during a revolution and the significance of defeats, the idea of employing bourgeois specialists, military experts in particular, by the proletarian state, the idea of forming revolutionary armies, the idea that only the proletariat as a whole can carry out a revolution, criticism of "barrack-room communism", to mention but a few.[2]

Summing up the experience of the European revolution of 1848-1849 was a qualitatively new stage in the evolution of the theory of scientific communism, the Marxist theory of classes and class struggle, the theory of revolution, the theory of the working-class movement. It set the stage for further advancement of revolutionary theory, equipped the working class, its vanguard with new means of struggle. At the same time, it transpired that the economic foundations of the theory of scientific communism had not yet been adequately studied. The mechanism of the development of the capitalist mode of production as the basis of bourgeois society needed further, substantially more profound research. Without it a conscious working-class movement, successful revolutionary struggle were impossible. After 1850 the evolution of economic theory became an increasingly important direction in the development of Marxism.

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 193.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 320-21, 549-56, 561; Vol. 11, pp. 68-69, 84-85, 312-14; see also: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 52-53.

In the period of reaction and a temporary decline in the working-class movement, Marx worked intensively to forge a new theoretical weapon for the future battles of the proletariat.

THE ECONOMIC THEORY OF MARX AND THE WORKING CLASS

In the late 1850s and early 1860s a breakthrough advance was made in the development of Marxist theory. Marx's titanic selfless efforts of many years culminated in 1857-1867 in the evolvement of a neat economic theory and the publication of the first volume of *Capital*. That was a revolution in political economy.

The economic theory of Marxism was not something isolated or self-contained—it was closely linked up with the other component parts of Marxism. The entire process of the development by Marx of his economic doctrine was at the same time a process of consistent economic substantiation of the world historic role of the proletariat as the architect of socialist society. "Marx's economic theory alone," Lenin said, "has explained the true position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism."[1] That was the most general significance of Marxist political economy for the working-class movement. From the very outset, however, the development of economic theory was closely bound up with elaborating proletarian strategy and tactics, with assessing the forms of organisation and class struggle of the workers, with identifying the causes, conditions and paths of socialist revolution.

SUBSTANTIATION OF THE INEVITABILITY OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

The economic theory evolved by Marx in 1857-1858 in the initial variant of *Capital* (manuscript *A Critique of Political Economy*) made it possible to deepen and supplement substantially the conclusions regarding the world historic mission of the proletariat which had been formulated as far back as the forties. In the process of his criticism of Proudhonism Marx worked out the main elements of his theory of value. He pointed out that the development of social production and the social division of labour within the framework of private property necessarily involves the conversion of a product into a commodity possessing exchange value, and of exchange value into money. Marx carried out this analysis on the methodological principle which plays the fundamental role in his economic theory and requires a differentiation between the social

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 28.

form and the material content of any economic phenomenon, in particular the value and use value of commodity, abstract (social) and concrete (private) labour, etc. At the same time, Marx showed that abstraction from the social form of the economic phenomena under study is impossible (it would be the opposite mistake to abstract from the material content of economic phenomena). The economic categories which express economic phenomena can be deduced only from relations of production—the latter are just what constitutes the social form of economic phenomena—rather than from the material content of these phenomena. This methodological principle was fully opposed to the methodology of the Proudhonists who imitated bourgeois economists in identifying the use value and the value of a commodity.

The most important element in Marx's analysis of the commodity in the manuscript of *A Critique of Political Economy* was clearing up the inherent relation between the conditions of commodity production, distribution and circulation. For this purpose, Marx formulated the notion of socially necessary working time as a measure of value of a commodity characterising its "economic quality", its exchange value. This notion epitomises the implicit relationship between value as an element of production relations and a given level of productive forces. The result of the functioning of productive forces, of concrete labour is a definite use value which, within the framework of a given system of relations of production, within the framework of private property, simultaneously appears as the material vehicle of the value of a commodity, just as concrete, private labour which has created this use value is simultaneously the material vehicle of abstract social labour, a particle of the aggregate labour of society. It is the process of marketing a commodity and its conversion into money that reveals the social nature of labour which has created this commodity, and concrete private labour is reduced to abstract social labour. In Marx's theory of value this is expressed in the fundamental necessity to convert a commodity into money, in the fundamental necessity of exchange, which is the outward manifestation of the inner contradictions between the use value and value of a commodity, between the private and the social character of labour which has created this commodity.

Marx completely exposed thereby the futility of the Proudhonists' attempts to convert a commodity into money directly, with the aid of "labour money"—to ensure direct exchange of all commodities, abolishing in this way the most acute contradiction plaguing the capitalist economy—overproduction crises.

Already in *The Poverty of Philosophy* it had been proved conclusively that equitable exchange itself cannot abolish capitalist

exploitation. Now Marx showed that the means by which the Proudhonists intended to introduce "fair exchange" (within the framework of capitalism) contradicted the very foundations of the capitalist mode of production, and consequently were Utopian. Of course, Marx's criticism of Proudhonist reformism by no means meant a rejection of economic reforms, including those which essentially affect the relations of production in bourgeois society.[1] Marx's criticism of the reformist illusions of petty-bourgeois socialism regarding the possibility of transition to socialism without a revolution is of permanent importance for the economic substantiation of the need for a socialist revolution and is perfectly valid to this day.

Having applied his theory of value to the relations between labour and capital, Marx evolved the theory of surplus value exposing the mechanism of capitalist exploitation and helping to identify the main tendencies in the development of bourgeois society, the economic law of its movement. Marx's analysis of the mechanism of capitalist exploitation also proceeds from a differentiation between the material content and the social form of the process of capitalist production. Marx showed that the relationship between labour and capital contains two qualitatively different elements: (1) the proper exchange between the worker and the capitalist following from the social capitalist form, in which the capitalist appropriates the proletarian's labour power which preserves and augments capital; (2) the process of labour itself following from the material content of capitalist production, in the course of which capital is preserved and augmented. The clearcut differentiation between the material content and the social form of the relationship between labour and capital helped to reveal that the object of the transaction between the worker and the capitalist is not the worker's labour, because this labour represents the material content of the production process and occurs in its second stage. Since he is not the owner of the means of production the worker can own neither his labour nor the product of his labour. He owns only his ability to work, i.e., his labour power. And he sells it to the capitalist.

Thus, Marx discovered the objective character of exploitation under capitalism. This immediately suggested the conclusion on the *necessity* of a socialist revolution, since the antagonistic character

[1] "This should be realised clearly", Marx wrote, "to avoid trying to accomplish impossible tasks and know the limits within which monetary reforms and modifications of circulation can modify relations of production and the social relations based on them." (Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rohentwurf). 1857-1858*, Verlag für freimdsprachige Literatur, Moskau, 1939, S. 64.)

of capitalist contradictions cannot be abolished through a quiet metamorphosis.

Further, the theory of surplus value brought to light the objective tendency of the capitalist mode of production towards an utmost intensification of the exploitation of the working class—primarily through the development of productive forces. As Marx established, the tendency to create a maximum of surplus value, which is objectively inherent in capital, is realised, first, through an increase in the inputs of labour and, second, by reducing to a minimum the input of necessary labour creating the necessaries of life for the workers. The categories of absolute and relative surplus value differently express this objective tendency of capital. The existence of absolute surplus value, i.e., the lengthening of the working day beyond the limits of necessary working time requires a definite level of labour productivity as its prerequisite. The increase in relative surplus value, i.e., a reduction in necessary working time in the course of capitalist development expresses the variations in the growth of labour productivity.

However, as Marx showed, the gigantic development of productive forces which accompanies the increase in the exploitation of labour by capital also means the formation and accumulation of the material elements of future communist society. It is precisely these material elements that make a socialist revolution *possible.* Marx wrote in this context: "...In bourgeois society based on *exchange value* such relations of production and relations of association arise that are, at the same time, dynamite to blow up this system ... if this society, the way it is, had not contained, covertly, the material conditions for production and the corresponding relations of association necessary for classless society, any attempt to trigger off an explosion would be quixotic...."[1]

Under capitalism the material prerequisites of future society—the social demand for surplus labour, the general diligence of members of society, the reduction of necessary labour to a minimum, the scientific substantiation of the process of extended reproduction, automated production are summed up in the creation of surplus labour which constitutes, according to Marx, the great historical aspect of capital. The social form of this category is expressed in the compulsory character of the worker's labour, in the appropriation of surplus value by the capitalist, in the exploitation of the working class. Its material content, however, consists in the creation through the development of productive forces of potential free time—over and above what is required for the simple maintenance of the worker's existence. The capitalist mode of production converts

[1] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* ..., S. 77.

surplus product into surplus value, but it creates for the first time the possibility of its use for other purposes.

The progressive character of capitalism as compared with the pre-capitalist systems, which was resolutely emphasised by Marx, is one of the most important conclusions he drew in the fifties from an analysis of the economic law governing the movement of bourgeois society. Capitalism alone, despite its intrinsic antagonistic contradictions, which inevitably make it a stumbling block on the path of mankind's further development, could provide such development of productive forces[1] that is necessary for a transition to communism and the all-round development of all members of society. This makes Marx's theory essentially different from the Utopian views of pre-Marxian socialism, from the petty-bourgeois theories of his time, etc. Engels wrote in this connection: "It should be recognised as Marx's contribution as compared with ordinary socialists that he shows the existence of progress also where the extremely lop-sided development of modern conditions is followed by horrible direct consequences. This is in evidence in every description of contrasts between wealth and poverty, etc. generated by the factory system as a whole."[2]

However, having performed its historic mission and having socialised labour in every way, capitalism, as Marx showed further, turns into an obstacle in the way of mankind's progress. Marx names four factors constituting the objective limits which the capitalist mode of production sets to the development of productive forces: (1) limitation of the value of labour power to the framework of necessary labour; (2) limitation of surplus working time to the framework of surplus value; (3) the need for marketing a commodity to convert it into money; (4) limitation of the production of use values to exchange value. All these factors put together are characteristic of capitalist relations of production discrepant with the development of productive forces and at a certain level becoming antagonistic to this development.

Until what time is the progressive development of capitalism possible? Marx has given a perfectly clear answer to this question. The highest development of the basis, he points out, "is the point where the basis itself assumes such a form that makes it compatible with *the highest development of productive forces* and therefore also with the richest development of individuals [in the conditions of a given basis]. As soon as this point is reached further development

[1] One of the fundamental results of the development of productive forces under capitalism is the tendency, discovered by Marx, towards the conversion of universal social knowledge, science into an immediate productive force (See Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*..., S. 594).

[2] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 16, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1968, S. 227.

appears as a decline, and new development begins on a new basis."[1]

The development of bourgeois society is accompanied by the decomposition of capital as the predominant form of production. The development of productive forces leads to a situation where the productive process turns into the technological application of science, and direct labour becomes but a secondary although indispensable element of the productive process. This undermines the foundation of the capitalist mode of production based on the law of value, on working time as the single determining factor. Trying to reduce working time to a minimum, capital preserves it simultaneously as the sole measure and source of wealth. Such is the first moment of decomposition of capital.

The development of productive forces within the framework of capitalism also brings about a situation where direct labour loses the character of private labour, which appears as a particle of social labour only through exchange. "*Thus, the other basis of this mode of production is also cancelled out.*"[2] In this way, the material conditions are created within bourgeois society for exploding its economic foundation. These same conditions are the starting point for the development of communist society.

SUBSTANTIATING THE NECESSITY AND POSSIBILITY OF WORKING-CLASS STRUGGLE FOR HIGHER WAGES AND A SHORTER WORKING DAY

Marx continued his analysis of the relations between labour and capital in 1861-1863 in the second rough copy of *Capital*. In that period he concentrated on an analysis of the "labour power" commodity, primarily on determining the value of this commodity and its monetary expression—wages. The bourgeois economists, beginning from the physiocrats, regarded "the value of labour" as an invariable quantity independent of the stage of historical development, developed the conception of a "minimum wage", whereby the level of wages is determined by the cost of a permanent set of necessaries of life physically required for the worker's existence. His refutation of this conception enabled Marx to prove the *need* for the working class to struggle for higher wages and a shorter working day. Marx proved that "the number and extent of his [the worker's] so-called necessary wants, as also the modes of satisfying them are themselves the product of historical development, and depend therefore to a great extent on the degree of civilisation of a country".[3] Consequently, in determining the level of wages just as

[1] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie...*, S. 439.
[2] Ibid., S. 597.
[3] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 168.

the value of labour power it is by no means a question of "the extreme limit of physical necessity",[1] although capitalism really seeks to reduce the value and price of labour power to a minimum. Hence the economic need for a constant struggle of the working class for higher wages, as well as for a shorter working day. If the workers gave up their struggle against "the encroachments of capital", Marx noted in 1865, "they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation".[2]

Marx not only revealed the necessity but also proved the economic *possibility* of working-class struggle for higher wages. Already Ricardo had established that such wage raises do not lead to increases in the cost of commodities but only reduce the rate of profit extracted by the capitalist. An all-round substantiation of this important fact, however, became possible only when Marx, having evolved his theory of average profit and the price of production, explained on the basis of the law of value, the essential shift in price formation which had occurred with the changeover from relations between simple commodity producers to capitalist relations. Marx showed that the "exceptions" cited by Ricardo from the movement of wages independent of the value of commodities, a fact he had established himself, only seem to be exceptions related exclusively to prices of production and not affecting the value of commodities; that wage raises, while changing the rate of surplus value, cause only mutually compensating deviations of prices of production from value, which represent the normal functioning of the mechanism of capitalist price formation within the framework of the law of average profit and the price of production.

This disproved theoretically the misconception, widely current in bourgeois society even to this day, that wage raises put up commodity prices. From this misconception followed the wrong conclusion that the workers' struggle for higher wages is useless, because what the capitalist loses from such a raise he will regain by jacking up the market prices of his commodities. In 1865, in a special report at two meetings of the General Council of the First

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 47, Moscow, 1973, p. 56 (in Russian).

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 75. The arguments quoted here to show the need for the working class to struggle for better terms of sale of its labour power point to a substantially higher level at which Marx's theory was in the sixties as compared with the forties of the 19th century, when Marx and Engels still believed that the trade unions "in the long run ... cannot withstand the laws of competition" deducing the wages to a minimum. (See, for example, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 435.)

International (later published under the title "Wages, Price and Profit") Marx discussed in detail all the aspects of this problem from the viewpoint of the working-class struggle.

Examining in a manuscript of 1861-1863 the process of capitalist production in its historical aspect, Marx for the first time singled out the stages of formal and real subordination of labour to capital, to which correspond the absolute and relative forms of surplus value. Although the formal subordination of labour which amounts to "placing it under the control of capital",[1] historically appears before its real subordination implying the emergence of a specifically capitalist mode of production, it is fully preserved also in the stage of developed capitalism just as its result—absolute surplus value.

The formal subordination of labour to capital is characterised by the domination of capitalist relations of production on the old production foundation. The material expression of this stage in the development of capitalism is absolute surplus value. The domination of capitalist relations stimulates an increase in the continuity and intensity of labour, an expansion of production, the development of the productive forces of social labour. The production of relative surplus value develops as a material expression of the real subordination of labour to capital. The transition from formal to real subordination of labour to capital is stimulated by the mechanism of the law of value, the desire of the capitalist to obtain additional surplus value in the form of the difference between the social and individual cost of his product.

Marx found out the dual influence of the transition to the real subordination of labour to capital on the position of the working class. The intensified exploitation is accompanied by the social growth of the working class. "The capitalist relationship appears ... as advancement to a highest social stage."[2] First, as regards the individual worker variations of his wages from the value of labour power are possible in principle and really take place. (In contrast to this, the minimum wage of the slave is a permanent quantity independent of his labour.) These variations create, as Marx says, "a wide arena (within narrow limits) for the worker's *individuality*", stimulate the worker "to develop his labour power proper", afford him an opportunity "thanks to his unusual energy, talent, etc. to rise to higher spheres of labour, just as there is an abstract possibility for a worker to become a capitalist himself exploiting other

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 47, p. 98 (in Russian).
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 49, Moscow, 1974, p. 88 (in Russian).
[3] Ibid., p. 87.

people's labour". Marx points out in this connection that the economic task facing the trade unions, in England in particular, is precisely to prevent a fall in the price of labour power (wages) below the level of its value.[1] Second, capitalist relations make the worker absolutely indifferent to the content of his work, to the specific type of his activity. "Therefore, since the division of labour has failed to make labour power absolutely lop-sided, the free labourer is predisposed and prepared *in principle* for any change in his labour power and his occupation ... if it holds promise of higher earnings." "All these changed relations," Marx concludes, "make the activity of a free labourer more intensive, more continuous, more mobile and more skilful than the activity of a slave, to say nothing of the fact that they make him capable of a quite different historical action."[2]

Summing up the results of his study of the formal and real subordination of labour to capital, Marx points out that while the prerequisite for the origination of formal subordination of labour to capital is a definite stage in the development of productive forces and requirements extending beyond the framework of the former relations of production and forcing the latter to transform into capitalist relations, the formal subordination of labour to capital provides the basis for the development of real domination of labour by capital, for "a full-scale economic revolution", which, on the one hand, reinforces this domination and, on the other hand, creates "the real conditions for a new mode of production ... the material basis for a social process of life organised in a new way and thereby for a new social order"[3]. Marx emphasises the fundamental distinction of this approach to an analysis of the capitalist mode of production from the views of bourgeois economists, who have been able to see how production is carried on within the capitalist relations but fail to understand at the same time how these relations themselves come into being and take shape "and how at the same time the material conditions for their disintegration are created within them, thereby cancelling out their *historical right* as a *necessary form* of economic development...."[4]

Marx exposes the characteristic tendency of capital towards an infinite increase in surplus labour, and paints a terrifying picture of capitalist exploitation. Overwork tends to shorten the normal period of the functioning of labour power, "destroys" its value and plays havoc with the normal conditions the worker needs to sell

[1] Ibid., pp. 122-23.
[2] Ibid., pp. 89, 87-88.
[3] Ibid., pp. 118-19
[4] Ibid., p. 119.

his labour power.[1] Marx writes in this context: "Capitalist production appears as the most economical one ... in relation to *materialised* labour.... At the same time capitalist production more than any other mode of production is extravagant in relation to man, to living labour; it wastes not only man's flesh and blood, his physical strength, but also his mental and nervous energy. Indeed, it is only at the cost of immense harm to the development of each individual that their general development is achieved in the historical epochs which are a prelude to the socialist organisation of human society."[2]

The resistance of the working class sets certain limits to the growth of absolute surplus value through the lengthening of the working day. The capitalist class seeks to overcome these limits by further developing productive forces, by raising labour productivity to enable the capitalist to convert a share of the formerly necessary labour of the workers into surplus labour, which leads to an increase in relative surplus value. Marx analyses in detail three consecutive stages in the advancement of labour productivity within the framework of the capitalist mode of production: co-operation, the manufactory division of labour, and introduction of machinery—which are simultaneously the three stages in the development of real subordination of labour to capital. At the same time, the productive forces of social labour operate as the productive forces of capital hostile to labour.

Marx showed that the objective result of the development of large-scale machine production is the intensification of labour. The growth in labour intensity leads to "a diminution of the pores of time through ... compression of labour", an increase in the inputs of "mental energy, greater nervous strain, and at the same time greater physical exertion".[3] The intensity and duration of labour, however, cannot grow concurrently—they follow one another. For example, the struggle of the working class for a shorter working day, which was crowned with the enactment of the law on a 10-hour working day generated a large wave of improvements in industry to raise the intensity of labour. The revolution in industry, Marx said, "was an *imposed* result of the legislative enforcement of the extreme limit of labour exploitation".[4]

---

[1] Marx indicates, in particular, the artificial reduction in the value of labour-power by impairing the quality or diminishing the quantity of the necessaries of life consumed by the worker, as well as by employing children or reducing training expenses.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 47, p. 186 (in Russian).

[3] Ibid., pp. 370, 395.

[4] Ibid., p. 397. Contemporary scholars point out that a shorter working day introduced in some capitalist countries during the last few years has not fully compensated for the increase in labour intensity.

THE IMPACT OF CAPITALIST ACCUMULATION ON THE WORKER'S POSITION

Along with the main definition of productive labour as labour creating surplus value, Marx in his studies presented its definition in a narrower sense: this is labour creating material wealth consisting of commodities. It is precisely the identification of labour employed in material production—Marx describes it as "labour which enters into the production of *commodities* (production here emb aces all operations which the commodity has to undergo from the first producer to the consumer) no matter what kind of labour is applied, whether it is manual labour or not ([including] scientific labour)"—that provides the required prerequisite for analysing the position of the working class, the principal representative of this sphere in bourgeois production. "This difference must be kept in mind and the fact that all other sorts of activity influence material production and vice versa in no way affects the necessity for making this distinction."[1]

Marx proved that the increase in the productivity of labour necessarily leads to a relative decrease in the number of workers employed in material production. "Although the number of workers grows in absolute terms, it tends to diminish ... relatively to that segment of society which is not directly connected with material production or is uninvolved in any production in general."[2] The growth of labour productivity under capitalism results in the growth of the unproductive sphere, the mass categories of working people employed in it, and a temporary slow-down in the erosion of the intermediate strata between the workers and the capitalists. The tendency towards a relative shrinkage of the sphere of material production in the total mass of wage labour, while being profoundly progressive in general and reflecting the results of the development of productive forces, in the conditions of capitalism adds to the burden the working class has to bear as the material foundation of society, increases the influence and power of the "ten thousand at the top".

The capitalist mode of production generates a division between mental and physical work and opposes them to one another. Both these types of work combine for a definite time directly in the process of production: the material product of the joint work of both mental and physical workers. Therefore, Marx notes, "this does not prevent ... the relation of each one of these persons to capital" from "...being

---

[1] Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 432.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 47, p. 338 (in Russian).

that of wage-labourer". Add to this the fact that mental workers "owing to competition, are badly paid".[1]

Marx exposes here the material factor drawing proletarians doing physical and mental work closer together. Both act as producers of surplus value for the capitalist and both are exploited by him. In this context, Marx mentions an expansion of the limits of wage labour: many kinds of mental work are involved in the sphere of material production, as a result of which the limits of productive work are also widened. The body of producers now includes "all those who contribute in one way or another to the production of the commodity, from the actual operative to the manager or engineer (as distinct from the capitalist)".[2]

In view of the problem of productive and unproductive labour Marx analyses the superstructure of bourgeois society, the so-called ideological estates, the ideological component parts of the ruling class engendered by the antagonisms in the sphere of material production. As for the so-called free spiritual production of a given social order, "capitalist production", as Marx points out, "is hostile to certain branches of spiritual production, for example, art and poetry." In the case of the unproductive strata, "who produce nothing themselves, either spiritual or material", they owe their existence to "the faulty social relations", to "social evils".[3]

This progress from the investigation of capital in its general form to an analysis of commodity capital allowed Marx to examine the position of the commercial workers as one of the contingents of the working class. Marx points out that with the progress of the capitalist mode of production the commercial workers are converted from a privileged, better-paid stratum of the working class into a low-paid stratum. Marx mentions the following causes responsible for the depreciation of the labour power of the commercial workers: first, in consequence of the increasing division of labour their power develops lopsidedly, and hence its value gets cheaper; second, the spread of primary education, knowledge of foreign languages, etc. lessens the cost of training commercial workers, stimulates their inflow from the lower classes, and increases the competition among them. The tendency pointed out by Marx here is evidently of general significance, since with the development of capitalism the costs of production of a "specially trained labour-power" are reduced. Engels noted that "the forecast of the fate of the commercial proletariat" made by Marx in 1865 has stood the test of time.[4]

---

[1] Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, Moscow, 1975, pp. 411-12, 218.

[2] Ibid., pp. 156-57.

[3] Ibid., pp. 285, 289.

[4] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, pp. 389, 301.

Marx also analyses the material content and the social form of "labour of supervision and management". As regards its material content this is "a productive job, which must be performed in every combined mode of production", since "all labour in which many individuals co-operate necessarily requires a commanding will to co-ordinate and unify the process, and functions which apply not to partial operations but to the total activity of the workshop". In its antagonistic form this type of work arises from the antagonism "between the labourer, as the direct producer, and the owner of the means of production". Thus, under capitalism "supervision and all-round interference by the government involves both the performance of common activities arising from the nature of all communities, and the specific functions arising from the antithesis between the government and the mass of the people".[1]

In his manuscript of 1861-1863 Marx formulated in condensed form the conclusions from his economic theory regarding the impoverishment of the working class under capitalism, emphasised the triple effect of capital accumulation on the position of the worker: first, "the perpetuation of the means of production as property alien to him, as capital, perpetuates his condition as wage-worker"; second, "accumulation of capital ... worsens his position *relatively*[2] by augmenting the relative wealth of the capitalist and his co-partners" and reducing "that part of the gross product which is used to pay wages"; this results in an increase of "the extent and the size of the classes who live on the surplus labour of the worker"; third "since the conditions of labour confront the individual worker in an ever more gigantic form and increasingly as social forces, the chance of his taking possession of them himself as is the case in small-scale industry, disappears...."[3] Marx specifically emphasises here the *qualitative* aspect of the process of impoverishment, the sum total of the conditions of the working class in capitalist society. "The lot of the labourer," Marx points out in the first volume of *Capital*, "be his payment high or low, must grow worse."[4] Thus, the growth of labour productivity under capitalism operates as

[1] Ibid., pp. 383, 384.

[2] Answering in the first volume of *Capital* the English Chancellor of the Exchequer Gladstone, who had alleged that the "intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power" of the propertied classes "must be of indirect benefit to the labouring population ... while the rich have been growing richer, the poor have been growing less poor", Marx wrote: "If the working-class has remained 'poor', only 'less poor' in proportion as it produces for the wealthy class 'an intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power', then it has remained relatively just as poor. If the extremes of poverty have not lessened, they have increased, because the extremes of wealth have." (Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 610).

[3] Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, pp. 352, 353.

[4] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 604.

a factor of relative rather than absolute impoverishment of the working class. Examining the impact of the increase in the social productivity of labour on the workers' wages, Marx disproves the allegation that these quantities are inversely proportional to one another. "In fact exactly the opposite is the case," Marx stresses. "The more productive one country is relative to another in the world market, the higher will be its wages as compared with the other. In England, not only nominal wages but [also] real wages are higher than on the continent. The worker eats more meat; he satisfies more needs. ...But in proportion to the productivity of the English workers their wages are not higher [than the wages paid in other countries]."[1]

Marx's conception of the impoverishment of the working class under capitalism by no means rules out a widening of the range of the worker's consumption. Marx pointed out that improvement in the life of the worker "changes nothing in the *nature* and *law of relative surplus value*, changes nothing in the fact that as a result of an increase in labour productivity an ever greater share of the working day is appropriated by capital. This illustrates all the absurdity of the attempts to disprove this law by selecting statistical data to prove that the worker's material position in this or that area, in this or that respect has improved in consequence of the development of the productive force of labour".[2]

Thus, Marx's views have nothing in common with the hare-brained scheme of a continuous automatic process of deterioration in the workers' position under capitalism which his bourgeois and reformist critics ascribe to him. The true meaning of the Marxist conception is that in bourgeois society "the worker always works only for his own consumption; the difference occurs only between greater or smaller costs of his consumption". Marx also says that "the worker as such is a pauper by definition", mentions "the absolute poverty of the worker", emphasising at the same time that this notion "means nothing but the fact that his labour-power is the only commodity the worker has for sale".[3]

The capitalist mode of production is characterised by an objective tendency towards impoverishment of the working class, and its overexploitation. This tendency is expressed in the general law of capitalist accumulation Marx formulated in the first volume of *Capital*. It should be noted that although Marx called this law "absolute", he points out immediately that "like all other laws it is modified in its working by many circumstances". One of such

---

[1] Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part III, pp. 16-17.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 47, p. 279 (in Russian).
[3] Ibid., pp. 126, 38.

circumstances is indisputably the resistance of the working class, because "with the accumulation of capital, the class struggle, and, therefore, the class-consciousness of the working-men, develop".[1] Only organised resistance of the workers can be effective against the exorbitant claims of capital. It is impossible to oppose these claims by "scattered efforts of the workers"; the resistance of the whole working class is necessary for this. Marx emphasised that "the workers by themselves are unable—if they as a class do not put pressure on the state and through the latter on capital—to wrest from the iron claws of capital even the free time they need for their physical existence".[2]

In his theory of average profit and the price of production Marx also presented the economic substantiation of the common interests of the workers in their struggle against the capitalists. It followed from it that despite their competition the capitalists operate as an organised body in the exploitation of the working class. The only alternative to this is association of the workers not only on the national but also on the international scale. This was the economic substantiation of the slogan "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!" proclaimed in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party.*

Summing up his analysis of the historical tendency of capitalist accumulation, Marx presents a general assessment of the development of the capitalist mode of production, which is characterised by changeovers from non-economic coercion to "free" wage labour, from the formal to the real subordination of labour to capital. The organisation of a developed capitalist production process breaks down all resistance; the constant renewal of relative overpopulation keeps the demand for and supply of labour and hence wages within the limits corresponding to the need of capital for growth; the blind force of economic relations fortifies the domination of the workers by the capitalists. "Direct force, outside economic conditions, is of course, still used, but only exceptionally. In the ordinary run of things, the labourer can be left to the 'natural laws of production', i.e., to his dependence on capital, a dependence springing from, and guaranteed in perpetuity by, the conditions of production themselves." Marx points out the reactionary role of the bourgeois superstructure, in particular bourgeois legislation, in relation to wage labour which is always enacted with a view to the exploitation of the worker and is invariably hostile to him. "Only against its will," Marx emphasised, "and under the pressure of the masses did the English Parliament give up the laws against strikes and Trades' Unions, after it had itself, for 500 years, held, with shameless egoism, the position of a permanent

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 603, 612.
[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 47, p. 585 (in Russian).

Trades' Union of the capitalists against the labourers." Marx also recalls the actions of the French bourgeoisie in the period of the bourgeois revolution when, by the decree of June 14, 1791, it took back from the workers their hard-won right to association. Even the government of the Jacobinic dictatorship did not abrogate this reactionary decree which Marx describes as a "bourgeois *coup d'état*", as a "law, which, by means of State compulsion, confined the struggle between capital and labour within limits comfortable for capital".[1]

Such is the reactionary tendency of the capitalist mode of production and its superstructure following from its antagonistic social form. Marx also formulates another, progressive tendency, which is determined by the objective laws of the development of large-scale production, its concentration and centralisation—a tendency providing for both the necessity and possibility of replacing capitalism with communism: "...develop, on an ever-extending scale, the co-operative form of the labour-process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labour into instruments of labour only usable in common, the economising of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialised labour, the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world-market and with this, the international character of the capitalistic regime". Capitalist exploitation increases but with this too grows "the revolt of the working-class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself". And, at last, the final conclusion on the inevitability of socialist revolution: "The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated." A socialist revolution effects "the transformation of capitalistic private property, already practically resting on socialist production, into socialist property"; it re-establishes "individual property based on the acquisition of the capitalist era: *i.e.*, on co-operation and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production."[2]

* * *

The main criterion Marx was invariably guided by in his scientific studies is formulated in simple words: the interests of the proletarian

[1] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 689, 692.
[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 714-15.

revolution, the interests of the proletariat. Marx was above all a revolutionary rather than an armchair scholar, and his theoretical work was directly determined by the development of the world revolutionary process. He invariably regarded his work on *Capital* as his main *party* duty of crucial importance for the struggle of the working class.[1] "Although I devote much time to preparations for the Geneva congress," Marx wrote in 1866, "I cannot, nor do I want to attend it, because a long break in my work is impossible. I regard what this work of mine will yield as far more important for the working class than anything I could personally do at whatever congress."[2]

At the same time, he had to make strenuous efforts to inculcate in the minds of advanced members of the working class an understanding of the need for the independent development and profound study of economic theory. Telling J. Weydemeyer in 1851 of the enormous and hard work he was doing in the field of political economy, Marx said ironically that "democratic 'simpletons' who are visited by inspiration 'from heaven' have no need for such efforts, of course. Why should these pets of fortune torment themselves over a study of economic and historical material? Indeed, it is all so simple, as the meritorious Willich used to tell me."[3]

When Marx's work *A Critique of Political Economy* came off the press, he wrote bitterly in a letter to Engels: W. Liebknecht "told Biskamp that no book had ever disappointed him so, and Biskamp himself told me that he did not understand 'who needs all this'". Engels expressed his indignation at this fact in a letter to his friend.[4] Later, Marx more than once heard other rebukes concerning the "untimeliness" of his economic studies.[5] The misunderstanding which surrounded Marx's work in evolving his economic theory reflected—besides the objective difficulties of its assimilation—what was evidently a current negative or at best a distrustful attitude to an abstract economic theory as to some scholastic invention of no practical value. In a letter to Engels on May 16, 1868, Marx pointed out one of the reasons for such misunderstanding, noting that "what is practically interesting and what is theoretically necessary may far diverge from one another in political economy".[6] The scrupulous analysis of the "economic cell" of bourgeois society made by Marx might appear to some as nebulous disquisitions over trifles. For the theory of surplus value and hence for the theory of scientific communism, however,

[1] See Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1967, Bd. 29, S. 567; Bd. 30, 1964, S. 565; Bd. 31, 1965, S. 541, etc.
[2] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 31, S. 520.
[3] Ibid., Bd. 27, S. 560.
[4] Ibid., Bd. 29, S. 580-85.
[5] Ibid., Bd. 30, S. 334.
[6] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1965, Bd. 32, S. 88.

these "trifles" were of fundamental importance. It was not fortuitous that Engels described Marx's economic theory as the *bedrock* of the proletarian party.[1]

The proclamation of the interests of the proletariat as the central criterion in Marx's studies by no means run counter to their truly scientific character. On the contrary, it was precisely his steady abidance by this criterion that accounts for the extraordinary effectiveness of Marx's theory and the tremendous role it has played in changing reality. Engels excellently described this distinction of Marxism: "So far as a 'man of science', of economic science, is concerned, he must have no ideal and must obtain scientific results, but if on top of that he is also a Party man, he must work for their materialisation in practice."[2]

Of course, the most crucial test for Marxist theory could be and really was only the proletarian revolution which set the stage for the transition from capitalism to communism and proved that the world revolutionary process ran its course "according to Marx". However, there were also other methods to test the validity of the Marxist economic doctrine, in particular, those related to the daily economic struggle of the working class against the capitalist class. Indeed, what Marx had created in the field of economic theory was nothing else but the political economy of the working class. That was precisely why in evolving his economic theory Marx invariably sought to formulate the main principles of the economic policy of the working class in its struggle against the capitalists and the capitalist state.

His faithfulness to the above criterion enabled Marx to evolve a scientific theory that has since become a dependable guide to action, indicated a method and provided guidelines for a study of the processes of socio-economic and political development, for planning the strategy and tactics of the working-class struggle. The development of the theory of scientific communism was concurrent with the process of its spread in the midst of the workers. In the early years after the defeat of the European revolution of 1848-1849, no conditions for broad dissemination of Marxism still existed; one could only observe a gradual increase in the cadre of proletarian revolutionaries, the rallying of individual champions of scientific communism around veteran members of the Communist League in various countries (E. Jones and a few Chartists in England, J. Weydemeyer and F. A. Sorge in the USA, W. Liebknecht, P. Stumpf in Germany J. P. Becker in Switzerland).

The fundamental works of Marx and Engels were known at the

---

[1] See Marx/Engels, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1967, Bd. 35, S. 319-20 (Author's italics).

[2] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1967, Bd. 36, S. 198.

time only to a narrow circle of like-minded comrades, mostly in Germany itself and among the German emigrant workers. Of special importance for propaganda of scientific communism in that period were publicistic articles by the founders of Marxism in the American, British, and German labour and democratic press. Absorbed in the theoretical development of their doctrine, Marx and Engels, nevertheless, responded to all problems posed by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. They kept in close touch with leaders of the labour and democratic movement in a wide variety of countries, were in correspondence with their numerous associates, rendering them moral and material support in the hard conditions of exile. Their invariable concern in the years of reaction for the unity of proletarian revolutionaries on the principles of scientific theory laid the groundwork for the founding of the First International.[1]

[1] For greater detail see: L. I. Golman, *From the Communist League to the First International. The Activities of Marx in 1852-1864*, Moscow, 1970.

Chapter 9

THE NEW UPSURGE OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT AND FORMATION OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

MARX AND ENGELS FIGHT TO ESTABLISH THE PRINCIPLES OF PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM

The defeat of the European revolutions in the middle of the nineteenth century led to the domination of reaction in most countries on the Continent. Meanwhile the capitalist system continued to develop on an ascending line, demonstrating the still unexhausted growth potential of the productive forces. In the economic sphere it dealt the old system decisive blows, but more and more often the bourgeoisie formed a bloc with their former opponents, the semi-feudal landed aristocracy, the absolutist bureaucracy, and the military, against their previous allies, the popular masses.

The events of the 1850s and early 1860s made it quite obvious that this was not a matter of a temporary alliance; there was an interpenetration of previously antagonistic economic structures, political institutions, and ideologies. The bourgeoisie's fear of democratic, "plebeian" ways of breaking up the remaining feudal relations proved so great that they were prepared to sacrifice some of their own interests so as to keep the masses of the people out of the political arena.

Economic development in this period, as in the preceding one, took the harshest and most ruinous forms for the working people.

The new class basis of reaction showed most clearly of all in the establishment of regimes of a Bonapartist type. After the *coup d'état* of 2 December 1851 in France, which was soon followed by proclamation of the "Second Empire", and after the establishing of Bismarck's omnipotent authority in Prussia (and later in the German Empire), contemporaries spoke out, sharply exposing those regimes' reactionary, anti-popular character, but only Marx and Engels were able to define their essence and class nature, and to see in them not only a resurrection of old forms of reaction ("Caesarism" in the pet phrase of the French radical press), but also a new content connected with the historical peculiarities of the bourgeoisie's evolution as a class.

In his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* Marx had already shown the bankruptcy of the thesis of Bonapartism's supra-class character, demonstrating that the very logic of the development of the class struggle had led the bourgeoisie to reject such a direct, "pure" form of its own rule as the bourgeois republic, and that Bonapartism was the dictatorship of the most counter-revolutionary part of that class, which in the long run served the interests of the whole bourgeoisie. Marx also made the special nature of this form of domination clear—a certain independence of the executive power based in part on a policy of manoeuvring between classes, gross demagogy masking defence of the exploiting upper classes' interests, preponderance of the army, monstrous growth of bureaucracy, a flourishing of corruption, and extreme chauvinism. The critique of Bonapartism was considerably supplemented in a number of subsequent articles by the founders of Marxism, especially in Engels' *The Prussian Military Question and the German Workers' Party*,[1] and *The Housing Question*,[2] in which he disclosed the features of its Prussian form. Marx also noted elements of Bonapartism in Palmerston's policy (especially his foreign policy). In other words, Marx and Engels considered the tendency toward Bonapartism to be, if not a universal phenomenon, at least one typical of those years.

The socio-political stagnation associated with reaction's triumph was not, and could not be, absolute. In its development capitalism, as a system of industrial relations, imperatively required certain changes in the superstructures. These changes were brought about in various ways: in some cases "from above", by means of reforms and dynastic wars, by the ruling classes themselves; and in other cases (mainly on the periphery) through bourgeois-democratic revolutions.

The important events of those years were the reform of 1861 in Russia, which laid the basis for emancipation of the peasantry from serfdom, and the Civil War in the United States (1861-1865), during which black slavery was abolished. The fundamental content of the historical process in the 1850s and 1860s, however, consisted, especially in Europe, in a national-bourgeois movements for liberation.[3] It was in that sphere that the bourgeoisie (its lower, more popular strata) preserved its revolutionary character longest. The movement for the unification of Germany and Italy, and the liberation struggle in Poland and Ireland, objectively reflecting the vital needs of social development, were in the focus of Europe's political and ideological life.

---

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 16, S. 37.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 295.

[3] See V. I. Lenin, "Under a False Flag", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 143.

THE PREREQUISITES OF INTERNATIONAL UNITY OF THE PROLETARIAT

The new upswing of the revolutionary democratic and working-class movement that began in Europe at the end of the 1850s was an important stage in the evolution of the proletariat's activity. It was then that the proletariat came forward as a revolutionary class on an international scale, as an international revolutionary force. The complex, contradictory events of those years laid a deep impress on the social and political aspirations of the various sections of the working class. The working class, being very closely linked with the varied social groups from which it sprang, reflected their needs, views, and interests either directly or in altered form. But this sense of community of interest, for all its positive significance, was only the starting point of the proletariat's movement toward understanding of its own special, leading role in the joint fight of the working people against oppression and to build a new, socialist system without exploiting classes. The road to that lay through proletarians' consciousness of themselves as a class, and of their own specific interests. For both the working-class movement as a whole, and each individual worker, this road signified overcoming of the common petty-bourgeois, utopian opinions and attitudes peculiar to the socialist sects of the time, and also to narrow, craft trades unionism. Having created the premises for the development of a scientific, proletarian outlook on the world, the working-class movement could not advance further without its militant contingents assimilating Marxism. The practical experience acquired prepared workers to adopt Marxism and helped them understand their special position in society and place in social development.

In the mid-50s there were already signs that the apathy which had temporarily become common among working men as a result of the defeat of the European revolutions of 1848-1849 was giving way to an upswing of the working class' public and political activity.

The treachery of both the liberal bourgeoisie and the radicals caused only temporary disappointment with republicanism among the workers. It could not stifle the general democratic trends inherent in the working-class movement. Even in France, where this disappointment had been strongest, the traditional conception of a republic retained its fascination in the heart of the working class. There, and also in Spain and Italy, republican ideas, sometimes in the form of slogans for a "social" or "red" republic, were combined with very widespread demands for direct legislation, self-government, and a federation of free associations.

Disappointment with the possibility of meeting working men's urgent needs within the existing political system was more lasting,

and gave rise to a mistaken conclusion that it was necessary to reject the idea of politics as such completely.

Politico-ideological trends that existed both within the proletarian milieu and outside it had a big influence on the views of various groups of the working class. The activity of revolutionary democratic left bourgeois organisations and bodies, for example, had considerable significance for workers' consciousness of the paramount importance of international unity of their own forces against general European reaction. For all the limitations of the concrete aims and narrowness of the ideological position of these organisations (nationalism, the preaching of class peace within one's "own" nation, a counterposing of the national question to socialism), the influence of their views on the working class and the working-class movement was not just negative.

The views and practical activity of Giuseppe Mazzini, above all, must be recalled in that connection. In striving to build a single national state in Italy Mazzini resolutely supported a revolutionary solution of the matter. He saw the masses of the people as the main force in the country's unification. At the same time he ignored the existing, deepening class contradictions. He conceived the settlement of social conflicts to be by way of the organisation of class cooperation through the spread of education. Mazzini considered "enlightened" elements the vehicles of social progress. The aim of his organisations was not simply to draw working men into the democratic struggle to settle the national question but also to restrain them from advancing "selfish demands" (Mazzini himself often opposed socialist and communist theories). At a certain stage, however, the vigorous revolutionary actions organised by his supporters became an important factor dissolving political indifference among the workers and developing their general democratic aspirations. The Garibaldi movement played a similar role.

In spite of the diversity of the situation in individual countries, European democracy (just like European reaction) largely felt itself a single whole. The objective of the struggle even against the local attacks of reaction often took on a general European character. Working men were actively involved in the democratic movements, which gradually led them to the idea of the possibility of an international working-class association.

At the same time the impact of bourgeois-democratic and radical ideology on the proletariat prevented their realisation of their own specific, class interests. The significance of that negative factor grew as the revolutionary content of the bourgeois-democratic, national liberation movement in Western Europe evaporated. During the unification of Germany and Italy, the positive sides of this movement began to take a secondary place as the proletariat's class indepen-

dence grew. That was seen very distinctly in the evolution of Mazzinianism, which began to be an obstacle to the working-class movement's development from the middle of the 1860s.

Proudhonism, which had considerable influence then in workers' circles, mainly in Romance countries, had a dual effect on the moulding of proletarians' consciousness.

The events of the 1850s and 1860s confirmed one of the main lessons of the revolutions of 1848-1849: namely, that the representatives of utopian socialism lacked the power to defend working men's interests and could not explain social processes, in particular the mounting significance of economic contradictions. French workers' disappointment with Louis Blanc, the marked decline in the influence of the many petty-bourgeois, sectarian trends of socialist thought in European countries (at a time when the conditions had not yet ripened for the working class' transition to the position of scientific communism) had created the soil (which had not existed before the 1848 Revolution) for broad dissemination of Proudhon's ideas.

His ideas had not been put to the practical test during the revolution itself. That only happened later, in 1871. Proudhon's conduct in the years of counter-revolution stirred workers' sympathy. Proletarians were also very impressed by his endeavour to provide a scientific substantiation of his views. It was extremely difficult for the working man to distinguish between real science and pseudo-scientific constructs. Only a few were aware that Proudhon was a dilettante incapable of rising above the limited level of petty-bourgeois thought. Marx's criticism of his system of views was almost unknown in Romance countries. At the same time Proudhon's appeal to philosophy and political economy, and his claims to have discovered the laws of economic affairs and thereby to make a "scientific" forecast of the future destiny of bourgeois society, met the labouring men's craving for knowledge and an independent understanding of what was happening.

Proudhon's views were disseminated in countries where the industrial revolution had not yet been completed and where petty commodity production, handicrafts, and petty trade were still preserved on a broad scale. Proudhon and his followers, not understanding capitalism's historically progressive role, saw the alternative to capitalist development in the perpetuation of outlived forms of the economy. "Not abolishing capitalism and its basis—commodity production—but *purging* the basis of abuses, of excrescences, and so forth; not abolishing exchange and exchange value, but, on the contrary, making it 'constitutional', universal, absolute, '*fair*', and free of fluctuations, crises, and abuses—such was Proudhon's idea."[1] That idea corres-

[1] V. I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 34.

ponded to the aspirations and opinions of the part of the working people associated with obsolescent forms of the economy.

Proudhon's sharp, passionate criticism of Big Business, and especially of the financial oligarchy, stockbrokers, the aristocracy, and the Catholic Church, drew proletarians to Proudhonism. In addition, he upheld the thesis of the specific nature of the labouring man's interests, and even of their opposition to those of the bourgeoisie. His calls for working men's self-organisation had positive value, even though he had a negative attitude to truly proletarian methods of struggle, rejecting even strikes. Proudhon denied the need for revolution and preached the possibility of a gradual transformation of society. That was a position deeply alien to the radical interests of the working class and harmful to the proletarian cause. The mistakenly understood experience of the revolutions of 1848-1849, however, created a favourable situation for spread of such views.

A mistaken interpretation of that same experience also made Proudhon's anarchistic ideas attractive in the eyes of many workers, i.e. his conception of the state as the source of social evils, his hostility to centralism of any form, his advocacy of federalism, and his rejection of political struggle. The spread of these ideas reflected—in distorted form—the process of the overcoming of bourgeois republican illusions among working men and the forming among them of an idea of the reactionary, anti-popular character of the bourgeois state.

Proudhon's views themselves were extremely contradictory. One can find in them defence of private property and proof of the superiority and even inevitability of collective ownership in large-scale industry. In theory he denied the role of proletarian organisations while in practice recognising a need for them. He rejected the state as such and at the same time limited himself to denial of the need only of executive authority. He combined individualism with propositions about the obligation to subordinate personal interests to the common good, with calls for co-operation of labour, and so on. That circumstance also promoted his influence to some extent; people of various views sometimes turned to him and relied on him. Bourgeois democrats (Mazzini and Garibaldi), and revolutionary anarchists (Bakunin and Guillaume), and Spanish utopian socialists (Garrido and Pi-y-Margall), and petty-bourgeois reformers of various hues in Belgium and Switzerland felt his influence.

There were also other reasons for the diversity and variation of the forms taken by the different varieties of Proudhonism. Among the labouring masses Proudhonist doctrines were often interwoven with ideas that reflected the limited experience of individual groups or sections of the working-class movement. The peculiarity of the conditions, traditions as regards ideals and principles, and so on,

had their effect on the way Proudhonism spread, so that a specific amalgam of views arose in each concrete case.

Thus, in addition to the "orthodox" Proudhonist-Mutualists, who added advocacy of free credit, exchange of services, and mutual aid to all his ideas, there were groups that accepted his anarchism but took a collectivist stand, or that did not share his negative attitude to trade unions and strikes. As the working-class movement developed, tendencies to recognise the need for economic struggle and to unite forces and support revolutionary movements (i.e. to repudiate his negative attitude to political struggle, including political struggle to settle the national question) became more and more predominant. Nevertheless, leaders of the working-class movement of the most diverse views in France, Belgium, Spain, and other countries, counted themselves, just the same, disciples of Proudhon.

A general evaluation of Proudhonism's influence on the working class in the period under review cannot be one-dimensional. While Proudhonism, by rejecting the general democratic aspects of the working-class movement, encouraged the latter's closing in on itself within sectarian limits, Proudhonists, on the contrary, by stressing the specific character of the proletariat's interests as a special social group, helped mould its consciousness of itself.

In spite of the dissimilarity, and sometimes mutual exclusiveness, of the ideas that were then affecting the working class, they not only coexisted in real life but penetrated each other, being combined even in the consciousness of a single person. In France, for example, and in several other countries (predominantly Romance) where Proudhonism was most common, one and the same worker, considering himself a follower of Proudhon and sharing his dogmas, at the same time took part as a citizen in political affairs and the democratic movement, sympathised with the national liberation struggle, and sought means to express this sympathy in practice.

The dialectical contradiction between general, democratic, national objectives and the specific goals of the working-class movement had already been resolved by Marx and Engels. And although the ideas of Marxism were not yet widespread, the consciousness of the working class had developed in the same direction, albeit in mystified form: the whole concatenation of the conditions of life and struggle had fostered a deep feeling of democracy in them, and at the same time had strengthened tendencies to independence and the striving to assert and confirm their position as a social and political force.

There were economic causes underlying this process. In spite of the inevitable gap between capitalism's level of development in different countries, a world capitalist market was taking shape in the 1850s and 1860s. The economies of the various countries were being

transformed into a single system of interconnected and mutually determined capitalist business.

Industrial advance, although taking place asynchronously, had spread to most of the major countries of the then world, and embraced not only Great Britain and France, but also Germany, the United States, Italy, and Spain. The new industries were growing most quickly of all. The pool of machine-tools was being renovated, and there was a boom in railway building. The invention of the Bessemer and open-hearth processes of making steel, and of the internal combustion engine and direct current generator, etc., were changing the very face of industry.

While the Industrial Revolution had already been completed in Great Britain in the 1840s, it was making great strides in Germany, Belgium, and France in the 50s and 60s, or was even, as happened in the United States in the 1860s, entering its culminating phase. Austro-Hungary, Italy, Russia, etc., were being more and more rapidly drawn into it. The development of means of communication was gradually linking the world together. The discovery of gold in California (1848) and Australia (1851) had given an extra impetus to emigration. By engendering migration, initially seasonal migration within one country, and finally global migration, capitalism broke down the labouring population's local and national exclusiveness and isolation.[1]

Impoverishment of the peasantry and artisans was continuing at various rates in the different countries.

There was a steep rise in the urban population, which was being reinforced by migrants from the countryside. In spite of industry's rapid growth they did not, by any means, all find work. The number of homeless vagrants and paupers increased everywhere. In several countries (Italy, especially in the south, and Ireland) pauperisation took on catastrophic dimensions. In Bonapartist France, where literally millions of peasants were ruined in those years, the government tried to solve the difficulty by means of a programme of public works and building. These measures, though they did not solve the problems, led to the rise of a specific social stratum, the "Bonapartist building trades proletariat", a backward group of the population that combined a lumpen outlook with extreme obsequiousness to the government.

Even in Great Britain, then the most prosperous country of capitalism, there remained a huge number of paupers, coming to a million persons. There, however, the phenomenon had a special character: in addition to declassed elements and immigrants (especially

[1] In 1853 Marx had remarked on the "immense and unprecedented emigration". See Karl Marx, "Revolution in China and in Europe", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 95.

Irish), a considerable number of unemployed from among genuine working men were being constantly added (and not just in crisis years) to the mass of the unfortunate.

Growth of industry and the development of capitalism in agriculture naturally led to an increase in the size of the proletariat. In Europe it nearly doubled during the 1850s and 1860s. At the same time the army of industrial workers grew very rapidly, and their proportion in the structure of the proletariat increased. Another important fact was the increase in the general proportion of wage workers among the gainfully employed population. In 1864 Marx noted that the working class already had one of the most important elements of success—numbers.

The creation of large-scale undertakings, primarily in the new industries, fostered the concentration and uniting of proletarians. At the same time, since it was in them that the new labour recruited from ruined peasants and artisans joined their ranks, the proletariat of these industries was not in the front ranks of the fighters in many countries, except Great Britain.

As before, the process of the establishing of machine industry remained contradictory. The competition of the cheap goods of the advanced countries, especially British goods, led on the one hand to the decline of handicrafts and on the other hand prevented the building up of a modern factory industry in less developed countries (Italy, individual areas of Spain, etc.). The manufacturers and mill-owners in those countries, trying to hold their own in the competition, resorted to an intensifying of the exploitation of wage labour in its primitive forms, cutting pay and lengthening the working day. The general process of the elimination of old forms of production often did not exclude their preservation. Scattered manufacture, cottage industry, and semi-artisan work, by being preserved, gave rise to terrible poverty. In those countries the state's role as an active economic force came out more and more clearly; old forms of production and methods of exploitation could only be maintained when the masses were without political rights, and by means of the most savage suppression of protest in any form.

Manual labour prevailed in quite large undertakings (as regards number of workers). The introduction of machinery in mining was still insignificant. As before manual labour predominated in the building trades, tailoring (an industry quite highly developed in Britain and France), the production of luxury articles and carriage-making (especially in France), and the clock industry (in Switzerland). But radical changes were taking place in them: they had ceased to be artisan, craft trades; big firms had developed. The work of master craftsmen and journeymen, converted into that of operatives, was depersonalised, and earnings fell. In addition to the decline in

the individual craftsman's status, competition among the workingmen themselves increased. Thus the objective and subjective conditions had built up for organisations of the workers of these industries to fight for regulation of the working day and a stabilising of pay.

The development of machine industry and the rise of a single capitalist market led to a further lowering of workmen's status and standard of living. It was not, however, an automatic process, and its results were largely governed by the course of the proletariat's class struggle. The levelling tendencies cancelled each other out. The most marked ones were those toward the creation of "privileged" industries and the rise and consolidation of a labour aristocracy, which was most clearly marked in Great Britain. This last circumstance gave Engels grounds for the conclusion he formulated in a famous letter (of 7 October 1858) to Marx: "The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat *alongside* the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable."[1]

For all the diversity of both money and real wages in various countries, and within separate countries, there was a certain general pattern in their movement characteristic of the 1850s and 1860s. In the United States and Great Britain wages were higher than in the other countries (although there were large sections of the workers, especially immigrants), whose condition differed little from that of their fellows on the Continent). At the other pole were the semi-proletarians of the most backward areas of Europe—Portugal, some parts of Italy, Spain, and the Austrian Empire—areas where pauperisation was most intensive of all, and where the raising of prices of farm produce to the highest levels had led to a steep rise in the cost of living. The substantial differences in wages were also governed by industrial factors and skill. The highest paid were, for example, printing workers, railwaymen, certain categories of engineering workers, and skilled workers in the cotton and woollen industries. The lowest paid were certain categories of building labourers and miners.

On the whole there was a certain growth of wages in those years, but it happened in conditions of marked fluctuations, especially in crisis periods. The rise by no means always led to improvement in the real position of all the workers in the mass. On the contrary, the standard of living of separate sections deteriorated. In Great Britain, in the late 50s and early 60s, the wages of building and clothing

[1] Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence...*, p. 103. For more details about the labour aristocracy see E. J. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men. Studies in the History of Labour*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1964, pp. 272-315 (Chapter 15. The Labour Aristocracy in Nineteenth-Century Britain).

workers fell steeply, and the position of Lancashire textile workers deteriorated. In Switzerland the earnings of watch-makers in 1867 were half what they had been in the 1850s.

An important component of the worsening of the workers' condition was the exacerbation of the housing crisis caused by rapid growth of the urban population. Slums in proletarian areas had already become not simply a British problem but a universal one. The growth of wealth and luxury at one pole made the insignificance of the producers' share of the national income especially obvious. The striking social contrasts became a powerful lever moulding class consciousness.

With the development of machine industry opportunities were opened up for intensive forms of exploitation. In addition to an excessively long working day, there was more and more often an intensification of labour, and a replacement of skilled labour by unskilled. In the cotton industry in Great Britain, for example, working time was shortened by 13 per cent compared with the 1840s, but hourly output increased sevenfold. On the whole, however, the length of the working day remained very high, and if and when a reduction of hours was achieved it was through the working class' persistent struggle.

A factor lowering workers' standard of living, primarily in Great Britain, was the widely practised importing of cheap labour from Ireland and the Continent. The foreign workers yielded entrepreneurs additional profits and were employed as involuntary strike-breakers. British, and sometimes American, workmen were acutely faced with the problem of overcoming competition on the labour market, which strengthened the propensity to unite and to establish contact with workers on the Continent. Consciousness of the need for joint struggle to raise wages and reduce hours grew, at least within the ranks of certain trades.

Moulding of the proletariat's class consciousness was stimulated by the economic crisis of 1857-1859, the first truly world crisis in the history of capitalism.

While the political situation of the 1850s and 1860s prompted working men to be an independent force, their economic position and living conditions aroused and strengthened an understanding in them of the community of their class' daily interests, destiny, and struggle, not simply on a national scale, but already on an international one. The patriarchal ties that sometimes linked master craftsman and journeymen, or master and servant, had been severed and relegated to the past. The concentration of production, which was especially marked precisely in the formerly most backward countries, became a powerful lever uniting the workmen and developing their class consciousness. Everywhere there was a drive to organise, but

everywhere the terrible watchdog of the law stood in the way of the forming of class organisations of the proletariat.

In Prussia working men's organisations were deprived of the right to unite with foreign societies under a law of 1850. After the Cologne trial of the Communist League, unions, meetings, and strikes were banned in all German states. Collective resistance to employers was treated as a criminal offence. In France the Le Chapellier Law operated until May 1864. Governmental repression led to there being only 15 workers' organisations surviving under the Second Empire out of the 299 that had existed in the 1840s. Between 1853 and 1855 there were 345 prosecutions of strikers. In Spain all workers' organisations were outlawed up to 1868. In Italy only benefit societies had the right to legal existence. In Great Britain ruling circles continued to employ old statutes against trades unionists and strikers. In 1863 alone there were 10,393 prosecutions for taking part in strikes.[1]

But no anti-labour laws of any kind could prevent activation of the workers' struggle. In the German states strikes were still the exception in the early 50s, but in 1857 they had become common events affecting the main industrial areas and the ports. Miners, weavers, fullers, printers, railwaymen, and port workers went on strike. And although the strikers set themselves economic aims, the strikes were in fact a struggle against anti-labour legislation. In several German states (Saxony and others) the governments were forced to lift the bans on the forming of workmen's societies. In other countries such organisations were set up in spite of the law.

The new upsurge of the working-class movement in France found expression both in an intensification of the strike struggle and rise of workers' organisations and in a gradual overcoming of apolitical moods and reserve. French workmen's first contacts with British workers at the World Exhibition of 1862, and their joint displays of solidarity with the Polish insurgents (1863) bear witness to that. An important indicator of their mounting interest in political affairs was the adoption of the Manifesto of the Sixty, published on 17 February 1864.[2] This manifesto set forth the platform of the workers who were putting up their own candidate, Henri-Louis Tolain, in the elections for the Legislative Corps. It was signed by a number of other leading representatives of Paris working men: Charles Limousin printer, E. E. Fribourg engraver, André-Pierre Murat mechanic, Jean-Pierre Héligon upholsterer, Joseph-Etienne Perrachon brassfounder, all Proudhonists by persuasion. And although the manifesto did not contain socialist ideas, it convincingly demonstrated the

[1] *London Trades Council 1860-1950. A History*, Lawrence and Wishart, 1950, p. 26.

[2] *Opinion nationale*, 17 February 1864.

workers' understanding of the need to represent and defend their trade and class interests.

In Great Britain the recession in the working-class movement that set in after the revolutions of 1848-1849 was not manifested as sharply as on the Continent. Attempts to revive revolutionary Chartism on a socialist basis continued until the mid-50s. Acute strike struggles (the Preston strike of August 1853-May 1854) broke out sporadically. But the old workers' organisations gradually died, and the working-class movement as a whole entered on a spell of dissociation and fragmentation. The economic struggle also died down.

The marked deterioration of the workers' situation in connection with the economic crisis gave a direct impulse to a new upswing of the movement in Great Britain. An era of strikes set in in 1857. The core of the struggle was the demand for a reduction of the working day with maintenance of the old pay. At the same time a striving to fight for the right to form trades organisations was clearly manifested during most strikes. Strikers also tried to get workers' charters adopted, a kind of collective agreement definining the rates for various jobs.

The London building trades' strike has a special place. For more than a year (from June 1858 to July 1859) the workers tried to get a nine-hour day from the employers. A joint committee of carpenters, masons, and bricklayers, led by a carpenter George Potter, was set up to negotiate with them. When the negotiations ended in an impasse, the workers of one building firm declared a strike on 21 July 1859. A lockout ensued. A big meeting of London construction workers was held in Hyde Park on August 3rd, which declared their firm intention to employ all lawful means to achieve the aims they had set themselves. The employers' association set up to fight the strikers decided to reject the demand for a nine-hour day and to refuse to employ members of trades unions.

The tense struggle, which lasted until February 1860, stirred the workers of Great Britain. The strikers received moral and material support not only from building trades unions but also from other trade unionists in England and Scotland, and from workers in Germany.

The strike leaders and representatives of other workers organised a mass campaign, appealing to public opinion. Characteristically, the men themselves considered their action a fight against the bourgeois economic order. W. R. Cremer, a carpenter, who came to the fore during the strike as a leader of the London builders, declared that if political economy was against them, then they were against political economy.

The building trades' strike ended in a compromise: the employers refrained from victimising trades union members but the working

day was not reduced. The main result was that the strikers clearly demonstrated proletarian solidarity, which was beginning to acquire organised forms.

The growth of trades unions intensified,[1] and important changes took place in them. Amalgamated unions were being formed covering all the workers of a given trade. The first of these was the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, founded in 1851. In 1860 the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners was formed, then the Painters' Society, and in 1863 the Boot and Shoe-makers. In the late 50s and early 60s area trades unions developed in the big towns (Glasgow, Sheffield, etc.). On 10 July 1860, the first session of the London Trades Council was held; it originally united the building trades unions, the clothing workers and boot and shoe-makers (later the engineers and others), and soon became an active factor in defence of the interests of the capital's workers. In 1868 the first British Congress of Trades Unions met, which laid the basis for the activity of the British Trades Union Congress as the national trade union centre.

The tendency for unions to amalgamate and centralise was intensified during the second London building trades' strike (in the spring of 1861). This strike ended in a partial victory; the working day was cut to 9.5 hours. During the strike there was a clear counterposing of the workers as a class to the capitalists.

Both building trades' strikes visibly demonstrated the value of co-ordinated action and solidarity, and that, moreover, not just on a national scale. They evoked a response from, and were supported by, workers in France, the United States, and Germany, where consciousness of workers' international unity in the fight for their interests was growing stronger. Success of the trades union and strike struggle in one country was seen as a common victory by the workers of other countries.

In those years, however, in England the practice and ideology of trades unionism as a reformist trend in the trade union movement began to take shape. The big unions uniting workers of one trade on a city or country-wide scale became very important. At the same time attempts were made to set up international trades unions, primarily by way of joining with related unions in the United States and Canada. Small unions, however, continued to predominate; in the early 1860s there were more than 1,600 unions in 405 British towns.

As before trades unions covered skilled workers, functioning in fact as the organisations of the better off and more educated part of the working class. Membership was closed to unskilled and lower-paid workers by the high membership dues; the organised workers

[1] At the beginning of the 1860s there were 600,000 members of trades unions in Great Britain, and 800,000 in 1867.

fenced themselves off from the labourers, or counterposed themselves to them, shutting themselves off within craft barriers.

The feeling of class solidarity and inclination to unite and organise independently displayed by the British proletariat in those years thus had a one-sided, distorted embodiment in the trades unions. These unions were led by officers (chairman or secretary, treasurer, etc.), elected for life and paid from the union's funds. A workers' bureaucracy with its typical narrow pragmatism arose and took shape then. These people knew their business quite well within narrow limits: working conditions, the demand for and supply of labour, the laws, etc. Many union leaders rose from their ranks, men devoted in their own way to the interests of their members, and possessing a flair for organisation.

A group of representatives of the radically minded British working intelligentsia (followers of the French positivist philosopher Auguste Comte)—Frederick Harrison, E. S. Beesly, and John Stuart Mill—had a big influence on the shaping of trades union ideology. They wrote for the trades union press and took part in workers' meetings and conferences. Their influence was contradictory. On the one hand their political radicalism, republican views, anti-clericalism, and endeavour to counterpose themselves to the traditional parties played a certain positive role. On the other hand their denial of the class struggle, hostility to revolution, and above all apologetics for the capitalist system, largely determined the development and consolidation of reformism in the British trades union movement.

Trades unionism started with recognition of the immutability of the capitalist mode of production. The objectives of the working-class movement were therefore reduced by its ideologists to improvement of the conditions for selling labour power and to establishing a fair wage for a fair day's work. Trades unions were often considered organisations to eliminate competition among workers. The offensive strike was deemed an extreme, and in general undesirable, means of struggle.

At the same time the majority of trades unions were not averse to politics. Many demanded reform of the electoral system (in 1862 the unions founded a Manhood Suffrage and Vote by Ballot Association) and other democratic reforms, above all full legalisation of trades unions (i.e. granting of the rights of a juridical person to them), and also opposed the ruling classes' foreign policy. The leaders of most trades unions behaved quite resolutely in the fight for these demands, and called for, and sometimes successfully organised, mass, extra-parliamentary actions. Demands of that kind, however, did not really go beyond the limits of the system of wage labour, in putting them forward the trades unions did not encroach on the foundations of capitalism. In other words, the trades unions pursued

a liberal labour policy. The ideology of trades unionism was alien to socialist views, even in their utopian form. It reflected the very limited experience of the skilled workers of Great Britain, who found themselves in the special conditions of British capital's monopoly in the world market.

For all that, the trades unions remained the only mass workers' organisations involved in the British proletariat's class struggle against the bourgeoisie. The strikes, demonstrations, and meetings in which they took part did not always end peacefully; in many cases the working men's practical struggle was objectively a challenge to the established order.

In the first half of the 1860s the trades unions and their leaders were involved in running several political campaigns. In 1860 and 1864 meetings and demonstrations were held in support of the Italian national liberation movement. In 1862-1863 there was a powerful solidarity campaign for the fight of the Northern States which frustrated the intervention plans hatched by Great Britain's ruling circles. The fundamental significance of these actions, which embraced all Britain, was that it was workers (and above all the weavers of Lancashire) who were suffering most from the reduced imports of cotton caused by the Civil War in the United States. In this case the proletariat of Great Britain and its trades unions were able to rise above narrow, vested interests.

During these campaigns a group of British trades union leaders and workers in the labour and radical movement stood out, who a short time later became the initiators of the founding of the International Working Men's Association, viz., George Odger, W. R. Cremer, Robert Applegarth, Charles Murray, Robert Hartwell, Thomas Facey, Robert Shaw, and others. They held different views and dissimilar positions in the movement, but they all—both the typical trades unionists and the more radically minded workers' leaders, close to socialist or Chartist ideas—were recognised representatives of their class, actively involved in its struggle, and expressed its feelings of class solidarity, and were trying to find an organisational embodiment of the workers' international community of interests. Links between British workmen's organisations and the associations of German proletarians, Polish emigres, and representatives of French workers were forged and strengthened in the course of struggle.

A powerful new impulse was given to further uniting of workers' organisations on an international scale by the Polish Rising of 1863. The working class of Great Britain, and the workers of the Continent (above all of France), expressing sympathy with the Polish insurgents, actively condemned the policy of their governments. On 28 April 1863 a meeting was held in St. James' Hall in London on the initiative of the trades union leaders, at which those present adopted

a petition to Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister, demanding Britain's intervention on behalf of Poland. The government's refusal gave rise to the idea of convening a new meeting with the participation of French workers. This meeting was held on 22 July 1863 in the same hall. A delegation of French workers that included Tolain, Perrachon, Bibal, and Murat was present. The demonstration of solidarity with Poland's fight for independence also gave rise to the idea of founding an international working men's association, although each delegation had its own ideas of the objectives of such a body.

THE FOUNDING AND CONSTITUTING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION

On 23 July 1863, on the initiative of the London Trades Council, representatives of British workers met the French delegation. It was decided at the meeting to set up an international organisation of the proletariat. An organising committee was elected to carry the decision out, which included the shoe-maker George Odger, and the carpenter John Eglinton. The committee was commissioned to draft a document defining the new organisation's aims and objectives.

On 20 November 1863 representatives of London workers adopted an address "To the Workmen of France from the Workingmen of England", written by Odger.[1] The address contained a quite clear economic programme. The fraternal relations of proletarians were recognised as an important means of successful struggle to increase wages, and to prevent employers from using foreign workers to break strikes. The broader objectives, however, were formulated very hazily. The association's aim was proclaimed to be weakening of the despots' power, which "would clear the way for honourable men with comprehensive minds to come forth and legislate for the rights of the many, and not the privileges of the few."[2]

The reply to this address was drawn up by Tolain in May 1864. He considered an association of "labourers of all countries" a means of opposing "an impassable barrier to a deadly system which would divide humanity into two classes—an ignorant common people, and plethoric and big-bellied mandarins."[3] His reply ended with the words: "Let us save ourselves through our solidarity!"[4]

In neither document do we find any expression of the more concrete views of English trades unionists or French Proudhonists. The most

---

[1] *The Founding of the First International. A Documentary Record*, Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, Moscow, 1935, pp. 2-7.
[2] Ibid., pp. 4, 5.
[3] Ibid., pp. 10-11.
[4] Ibid., p. 11.

general idea—the need for international solidarity—gained the upper hand.

Having put forward this platform, the organising committee took steps to enlist representatives of other nationalities, having established contact with various emigre organisations (proletarian and revolutionary democratic) in London. One of these was the Mazzinian Italian Workingmen's Association of Mutual Progress, a typical Italian workers' society of the time. In addition to artisans it enrolled political emigres from other social strata. Members of the Association (Luigi Wolf, P. Aldovrandi, Giuseppe Fontana, and Domenico Lama) who took part in the committee's work were closely connected with Mazzini. The Polish emigre Emile Holtorp, also close to Mazzini, was drawn in. Later when the International had already been constituted, representatives of another wing of the Polish emigration, more strongly drawn to the European proletarian movement, joined it (Anton Zabicki, Ludwik Oborski, Konstantin Bobczynski, and Jaroslaw Dabrowski). A representative of the French democratic emigration, P. V. Le Lubez, proved valuable in the preparations for the forthcoming international working men's meeting.

The establishing of contacts between the organising committee and the London German Workers' Educational Association (*Communistischer Arbeiter-Bildungs-Verein*) was an important step. Unlike most of the German workers' educational societies common in the mid-nineteenth century in Germany, Austria, the United States, and other countries, with difficulty freeing themselves from the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie, the London *Verein* had taken a definite ideological stand almost from its foundation (in 1840); it was a society of Communist workers, who had raised the banner of Marx and Engels in 1847 and had been a center of propaganda for the ideas of scientific communism for many years now.[1]

Among the *Verein*'s founders and leading members were Karl Schapper, Joseph Moll, J. G. Eccarius, Friedrich Lessner, Georg Lochner, Karl Pfänder, Karl Kaub, J. Rühl and C. Speyer, who subsequently became active workers in the First International and the international working-class movement. Marx and Engels themselves took part in the *Verein*'s work in 1847, 1849-50, and from the end of the 50s to the beginning of the 70s. They read papers at it and delivered lectures, and kept in close contact with its leaders.

The *Verein* always had an international character. In addition to Germans there were workers from the Scandinavian countries, Hungarians, Poles, Belgians, Russians, Czechs, Frenchmen, Italians, and

[1] See I. M. Sinelnikova, "The London German Workers' Communist Educational Society and the First International".—In: *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, 1964, No. 6, pp. 55-63; and also idem. *Friedrich Lessner*, Moscow, 1975.

Englishmen. In the 60s it had become the recognised centre of the London proletarian emigres, closely linked with worker organisations in Germany, Switzerland, and England. It was actively involved in the proletariat's struggle, collected money to help strikers, and took part in the political campaigns in defence of the Polish insurgents. Every year it ceremonially marked the anniversary of the July uprising of 1848. Its rules stated that its aims were "education of its members in the social sciences and politics and oral and written propaganda for social-democratic principles... for the social and political emancipation of the working class."[1] Its title included the motto: "Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!"

The *Verein* was actively involved in the organisation of an oncoming international meeting of workers.

The foundation meeting of the International Working Men's Association was held on 28 September 1864 in the small hall of St. Martin's Hall (in central London), where worker and democratic organisations often held their meetings.

From France had arrived the Proudhonist workers Tolain, Limousin, and Perrachon. French democrats, who retained an influence in the working-class movement, were represented by La Lubez, Jean-Baptiste Bocquet, and others. The lawyer Henri Lefort sent greetings and the draft of a declaration of the new association's principles. English workers were represented by leaders of the trades union movement (Odger, Cremer, Benjamin Lucraft, George Howell, and others), old Chartists (J. B. Leno, and Robert Hartwell), the Owenist John Weston, and a big group of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois radicals. The Mazzinians Wolf and Lama spoke on behalf of Italian workers, and Holtorp for Poles.

J. G. Eccarius, member of the London *Verein*, and Marx were present on behalf of German workers. The meeting was chaired by Prof. E. S. Beesly of London University.

The reports of the meeting convey the atmosphere of elation that prevailed; those present were enthusiastic, and felt they were taking part in a great event, the founding of a brotherhood of the working men of all countries.[2] The speeches were interrupted by shouts of approval and applause. The general mood of uplift prevailing in St. Martin's Hall and recognition of the importance of international unity of the working class, however, could not hide the fact that those present understood the new organisation's aims and character in different ways.

[1] Statuten des Communistischen Arbeiter-Bildungs-Vereins (Gegründet den 7. Februar 1840), Henry Detloff, Ltd., London, 1881, S. 1.

[2] See the systematic exposition of the history of the International Working Men's Association in this period in: *The First International, 1864-1870*, Part 1, Moscow, 1964 (in Russian).

Prof. Beesly, opening the meeting, spoke of the need to fight against the great powers' annexationist policy, and passionately and clearly exposed Great Britain's foreign policy. Then the above-mentioned address "To the Workmen of France from the Workingmen of England" and the reply of "The Workers of France to Their English Brethren" were read out. After several contributions, some of which, including that of Eccarius, have not been preserved in the archives, the following resolution was moved and passed: "That this meeting having heard the reply of our French brethren to our address, we once more bid them welcome, and, as their programme is calculated to benefit the labouring community, accept it as the basis of an international association; and hereby appoint a committee, with power to add to its number, to draw up the rules and regulations for such an association."[1]

The meeting thus only proclaimed the founding of the organisation without taking any decisions to define its class character and lay down its general aims and purposes. A tendency to separate from the general democratic current was only emerging, and while it was already quite distinctly displayed at national level, it could not yet be realised on the international level by either English trades unionists or Proudhonists, still less by Mazzinians, in such a new venture as the founding of an international working men's organisation.

There was even a real danger that leadership of the association would fall into the hands of bourgeois democrats. The value of Marxism as a scientific theory expressing the true interests of the international proletariat was very clearly manifested in those circumstances. Only Marx could draft a programme that would unite the various sections of the proletariat, trace boundaries of demarcation understandable for workers, and give the organisation a class, proletarian character.

The committee elected by the founding meeting, the first job of which was to draw up the rules and regulations, numbered more than 30 persons. Marx was included in the working sub-committee set up to prepare the drafts.

The drawing up of the Association's fundamental documents called for much effort.[2] Because of Marx's absence through illness, the claimants to the role of ideologist of the movement were Weston, who proposed a declaration of principles (in Marx's view "of indescribable breadth and extreme confusion"[3]), and the Mazzinian Wolf, who submitted as a draft the modified rules of the Italian Workingmen's

[1] *Founding of the First International*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1939, pp. 15-16.

[2] See V. A. Smirnova, "From the History of the Drafting of the First International's Programme".—In: *From the History of Marxism and the International Wor king-Class Movement*, Moscow, 1963, pp. 280-342 (in Russan).

[3] Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 138.

Association (an *Atto di fratellanza* or Deed of Brotherhood).[1] By far not all members of the sub-committee and the committee, the workers especially, shared the main propositions of the two documents. It is unlikely that those taking part in the discussion of them, except perhaps Eccarius, understood that they reflected yesterday and could not therefore provide the step forward that the working-class movement needed to make, neither did they give a scientific substantiation of the spontaneous craving for unity and class independence. Only a few understood the significance of the documents. The majority saw them not as the ideological principles of an international organisation of the workers but as a public declaration. Only after October 18th, when the committee, having discussed and approved the draft statutes as a whole, returned them to the sub-committee for editing, were they left to Marx.

The "Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association" and the General Rules, which he had radically redrafted, ridding them of the detailed rules and extreme centralising tendencies typical of the Mazzinian draft, were agreed unanimously by the committee on November 1st, which by then had already constituted itself the General (Central) Council. The unanimous adoption of the International Association's first documents, written by Marx, put an end to attempts to saddle the new organisation with a bourgeois-democratic programme; the proletarian, class character of the International Working Men's Association was defined from the very first. It was the first victory of the ideas of scientific communism in the International and determined the whole subsequent course of its development.

Sometimes, when the first documents of the International Association are considered, stress is put on the fact that Marx, allowing for the movement's then level, was forced to employ expressions that were inferior to the theoretically precise, measured formulations of the *Communist Manifesto*. There is another, more important aspect. These documents in large measure reflected a new level of development of Marxism[2] and of understanding of the essence of the capitalist system and exploitation of the workers, and so of the significance of the various forms of the proletariat's struggle, i.e. the level that Marx had reached in the course of work on *Capital*.[3] In addition they were the programme of a mass working men's organisation. They

[1] Gastone Manacorda, *Il movimento operaio italiano attraverso i suoi congressi (1853-1892)*, Edizioni Rinascita, Roma, 1953, p. 63.

[2] See I. A. Bach and V. E. Kunina, "The Triumph of the Principles of Marxism in the Programmatic Documents of the International Working Men's Association."—In: *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1964, No. 9, pp. 42-54.

[3] V. S. Vygodsky, *Contribution to the History of the Writing of "Capital"*, Moscow, 1970, Chapter IX (in Russian).

demonstrated that, within the proletariat's movement itself—in its organisational forms and ideas, albeit still in undeveloped form—there was an objective propensity for a scientific outlook on the world, for Marxism. Disclosure of this tendency also made it possible both to write documents that reflected the level of the working-class movement already reached and to bring forward propositions that provided possibilities for its later combination with scientific theory.

First of all, Marx clearly formulated the initial premise of the proletarian movement that "the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves".[1] Drawing on official British statistics he showed that in capitalist society "every fresh development of the productive powers of labour must tend to deepen social contrasts and point social antagonisms".[2]

While not directly putting forward a demand for the abolition of private property in the implements and means of production, Marx led up to the idea, counterposing "co-operative labour ... developed to national dimensions and, consequently, ... fostered by national means" to the antagonism of capitalist society.[3]

In the Association's documents, aimed at uniting the broad masses of the working men of different countries, Marx did not deem it necessary to put forward the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to which he had come much earlier. At the same time he pointed out that triumph of the workers' cause was inconceivable while political power was concentrated in the hands of "the lords of land and the lords of capital", who always used it to defend and perpetuate their privileged position. "To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes", he concluded.[4]

The idea of a political party of the working class was also set out in the Association's documents, but still in undeveloped form. Several of the propositions of the Inaugural Address that corresponded to the experience of the proletariat itself and to the level of the working-class movement would inevitably had led, with its development, to understanding of this most important condition for success of its struggle. Marx put the main stress on substantiating the need for international solidarity of the proletariat of all countries and for uniting of their hitherto unco-ordinated efforts.

"Past experience has shown," Marx stated, "how disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of

[1] Karl Marx, "General Rules of the International Working Men's Association", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 19.

[2] Karl Marx, "Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association", op. cit., p. 15.

[3] Ibid., p. 17.

[4] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p 17.

different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggle for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts."[1]

He furthermore demonstrated the necessity, from examples of current events, for the working class to take part in political affairs and for it to unite into an independent political force. His statement that the workers' numbers "weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge"[2] was most important. That sentence contains the idea, developed later, that the proletariat can transform the world only when it has a party armed with scientific theory.

The General Rules defined the Association's organisational forms and guiding principles in a general way. The highest body was the annual Congress, which appointed the General Council.[3] The decisive factor in carrying out the rules was the conversion of the General Council into the leading body, standing on guard of the organisation's class and mass character. Thanks to Marx's intervention the practice then common of honorary members was excluded from the Council from the very beginning. Members of the Council were obliged to attend its sessions on pain of expulsion. Marx boldly used the right to co-opt to the Council so as to supplement its proletarian nucleus in the very first months and to achieve a truly international representation.

In 1864-1866 the General Council established itself firmly as the leading body of the International, proletarian in its composition. It included representatives of the working class of various nationalities: Eugène Dupont and Auguste Serraillier (France), Hermann Jung (Switzerland), J. G. Eccarius, Friedrich Lessner, Georg Lochner (Germany), Robert Shaw, George Odger, W. R. Cremer, and John Hales (Great Britain), J. Patrick MacDonnel (Ireland), and others; Hermann Lopatin was a member from 1870, and Frederick Engels was elected to it on 4 October 1870. After the suppression of the Paris Commune leading emigre Communards (Edouard Vaillant, Walery Wroblewski, Frédéric Cournet, and others) became members of the Council.

In the first months the Council's structure was also determined in the main: a chairman, a minutes secretary, treasurer, and corresponding secretaries for the different countries, were elected from its members. The officers constituted the executive body, the Standing Committee (in 1864-1871 it was also called the Sub-Committee,

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 17.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Altogether, six congresses of the First International were held, as follows Geneva (1866), Lausanne (1867), Brussels (1868), Basel (1869), The Hague (1872), and Geneva (1873). In addition two conferences were held in London (in 1865 and 1871).

the Sub-Commission, and in 1872, the Executive Committee). At its weekly meetings (held on Saturdays, often in Marx's rooms) questions for discussion and the drafts of official documents were prepared, and current business reviewed. This body's role as Marx's base in the ideological struggle within the Council grew, especially after the Paris Commune. In case of need, in order to settle personal conflicts, the Council set up a third (or appeals) commission.

The General Council's rights and duties were defined by the Association's General Rules. It reported to the annual general congress, was obliged to implement resolutions, to prepare the agenda for the next congress, and co-ordinate the struggle of the workers in different countries. Its functions developed in the course of the practical movement and were made more precise: it was given the right to accept sections or to refuse them membership temporarily between congresses, and to expel individual sections and federations, and was obliged to check their observance of the General Rules.

The General Council met weekly in the evening. Business usually began with confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting. Then followed the reports of the corresponding secretaries on events in their countries, and the reading of letters and official communications, and newspaper reports. The system of corresponding secretaries who commanded the appropriate languages ensured close contact between the General Council and the workers' organisations in various countries. Marx, and later Engels, paid great attention to this aspect of the work. In particular they took constant care that the Council should receive at least one copy of all workers' newspapers that were organs of the International.

The General Council was a practical body; it kept an eye on the activity of the workers in many countries, and endeavoured to take an active part in it. At its sessions it was concerned with strikes and help for strikers, with reaction's schemes and the organisation of opposition to them, with the worker press, with the forming of new sections, with ideological differences and conflicts within sections, and with the movement's theoretical problems and the International's tactics on one question or another.

The fate of the first mass international organisation of the proletariat, the trend of its development, and the character of its impact on the working-class movement was decided to an enormous extent by the fact that its actual leader was Karl Marx. For the first time a scholar had appeared as leader of the masses who not only put science at the service of the oppressed and deprived but above all strove to put the means of emancipation into the hands of the proletariat itself. The very essence of the doctrine created by Marx—scientific communism—which discloses the patterns of development of human society and provides answers both to the fundamental and the daily routine

problems of the working men's struggle, determined Marx's dominant role in the International.

The significance of the subjective factor, i.e. Marx's talent as a leader and captain of the masses, must not, however, be forgotten. Later, in his speech at the graveside of his friend in Highgate Cemetery, Engels said with full justice: "His real mission in life was to contribute ... to the liberation of the modern proletariat."[1]

Marx's correspondence, the minutes of the General Council, the documents of the conferences and congresses, the Association's numerous appeals, addresses, and other materials drawn up by Marx, and the reminiscences of contemporaries demolish the attempts of Marxism's enemies to blacken his personality, and his image as leader and counsellor of the masses. Marx, the greatest scholar of his time, never blinded his audience with his knowledge. While posing the objective of arming the workers with scientific theory he knew how to speak clearly and understandably without in any way lowering the scientific and theoretical level of his written and oral utterances. There was none of the sickly pseudo-popular language characteristic of many undistinguished advocates of utopian socialism. Brilliantly aware of the workers' situation, and the level of development of their various sections, and of the problems of interest to the masses, Marx was able, by drawing on the workers' practical experience, and starting from the questions most vital to them, to bring them to an understanding of theoretical problems; he not only made propaganda for the propositions of scientific communism and instilled them into the workers' consciousness, but also taught them to think scientifically. Linked to them by thousands of threads Marx listened to their voice with immense respect and caught the signs of growth of their class consciousness. He was particularly happy when workers, following the logic of the struggle, put foreward demands to which he himself had only come as a scholar through years of observation and analysis.

Drawing on all the information at his disposal, and allowing for the level of the masses' ideas and moods, Marx unerringly selected the slogan for a definite objective that at any given moment would best be understood by a majority of the members of the International Association and put forward arguments that would ensure the General Council the support of a majority of sections. In doing so he made no concessions to alien class moods, and always, and in everything, pursued the aim, above all, of consolidating the independent class character of the organisation. In making joint actions in defence of common proletarian interests the keystone of its activity, Marx saw this as the road to unity of the movement's theoretical platform.

[1] Frederick Engels, "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 163.

A galaxy of worker leaders, gifted people infinitely devoted to their cause, gathered around Marx and Engels in the years of the International. They were not simply Marx's support in the leadership of the Association but were his comrades-in-arms in the true sense, people of distinct individuality and recognised leaders of the workers. Beside Marx stood Engels, unfailingly sharing all the difficulties of the ideological struggle and organisational matters with him; so it was even in the period (to 1870) when, living in Manchester, he could not join the General Council. Among Marx's associates were old members of the Communist League: the tailor Friedrich Lessner, a consistent battler for the ideas of scientific communism, who enjoyed no little influence among German and English workers; the carpenter Georg Lochner; the artist Karl Pfänder; the outstanding organiser and talented proletarian publicist J. G. Eccarius. We should also mention the Parisian musical instrument-maker Eugène Dupont, a participant in the June Uprising of 1848, and Hermann Jung, a watch-maker from Switzerland.

As the Association developed, Marx's sphere of immediate influence constantly widened. His links with leaders of the workers' movement on the Continent and in the United States—with Wilhelm Liebknecht, and later with August Bebel, J. P. Becker, César De Paepe, and F. A. Sorge—were highly important.

EMERGENCE OF A MASS ORGANISATION OF THE WORKERS

The founding of the International Working Men's Association was a clear expression of shifts in the frames of mind of the masses of the workers and of their craving for unity. It was necessary to convert this feeling into practical actions and to give it organisational form. The structure of the Association, which had been laid down in its very first documents drawn up by Marx, was highly flexible. On the one hand it was conceived of as a network of branches (sections) operating as bases for propaganda and organisational work in the different localities and linked with the General Council either directly or through regional or national federations. In addition to that system, which was built on the individual membership of each worker, Marx had also introduced another principle into the Provisional Rules, viz. the joining as affiliated members of already existing organisations of the proletariat.

That principle ensured the International a mass basis from the very beginning. The combination of those two forms of organisation in addition gave workers greater opportunities of getting around the various, very tricky police regulations that limited the activity of working men's societies in almost all European countries.

The International did not close its doors to representatives of any ideological trend, provided they recognised that the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself, and adopted the slogan "Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!" Marx considered it a paramount task to draw the masses of the workers into the movement, seeing in that the road to uniting scientific theory with the working-class movement.

The problem of "drawing in" workers' organisations faced the International during the whole of its activity. For Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Belgium, and Germany, it was solved in general in the first years. Later another aspect came to the fore in them, that of developing the organisational forms (although even in those countries more and more new strata were constantly coming into the movement). For Spain, Portugal, Italy, Denmark, and other countries, the task of involving mass workers' organisations arose in practice in the last years of the Association's activity.

One of the first bodies to join the International, as already mentioned, was the London German Workers' Educational Association (*Communistischer Arbeiter-Bildungs-Verein*). While keeping its own rules and continuing its own activity, it recognised the Rules of the Association and declared itself a section of the latter. The *Verein* took an active part in all the campaigns run by the General Council (to which members of the *Verein* like Eccarius, Pfänder, Lochner belonged), elected delegates to the general congresses, carried on propaganda, and so on.

A similar organisation that joined the International in 1867 at Marx's direct influence was the New York Communist Club (of German Workers),[1] in which old members of the Communist League played a leading role. Under the influence of the International the Club's members overcame a certain sectarian in-growing and tried to link up actively with the American labour movement proper (in particular, with the National Labor Union) and the German workers' movement in the United States. The Club's propaganda activity facilitated formation of a section of the International Association. From its ranks came F. A. Sorge, a prominent leader of the American and international labour movement, and one of the first propagandists of Marxism in the United States.

On the whole, however, the number of educational societies openly setting themselves the task of spreading socialist ideas and directly joining the International was not great. Much more often groups of members of the International Working Men's Association carrying on propaganda work arose within already existing societies, which

[1] For further details see: "The New York Communist Club (1857-1867)", N. S. Rumyantseva (Ed.).—In: *Marx and Some Problems of International Workers' Movement of the 19th Century*, Moscow, 1970, pp. 339-417 (in Russian).

were usually under the influence of bourgeois elements. Some of these groups then formed themselves as sections that got into contact with the General Council.

The workers' educational societies widespread in the German states had united in 1863 in the League of German Workers' Unions. Under the influence of former members of the Communist League who accepted the International's ideas, these unions were gradually converted into mass labour organisations of a political character. Much credit for that is due to August Bebel, who became head of the League of Union's board in 1867. Members of the International Working Men's Association strived for the League to adopt the International's platform and to comply with its programme requirements (formal affiliation being prevented by Prussian law).

For workers in the Austrian Empire the Vienna Workers' Educational League (*Wiener Arbeiterbildungsverein*) served as a kind of centre from the end of 1867. On its initiative societies were formed at the Hallstat salt mines, and in Brno, Graz, Linz, Bratislava, Pest, and Trieste. Some of these were associations of a national kind, others included workers of various nationalities in their membership (in Vienna, Wiener Neustadt, Pest, Bratislava, Prague, and other places). In most cases the societies were founded by members of the International Working Men's Association affiliated with German workers' organisations.

Educational societies that kept up the traditions of the German revolutionary emigres of 1849 functioned in the towns of the German part of Switzerland, with a centre in Bern. A member of such a society in Zurich, the bookbinder Hermann Greulich, a talented organiser and publicist, subsequently became one of the founders of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party. Many of these societies (in Geneva, Vevey, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Neuchâtel, Yverdon, Lucerne, Lausanne, Bern, and other towns) voted, under the influence of J. P. Becker, to affiliate to the Association; the German Social Republican People's Union (*Deutscher social-republikanischer Volksbund*), founded by Becker, an organisation close in its ideas and aims to a socialist proletarian party, had already declared itself a section of the International in February 1865.

It was quite different with the oldest educational organisation of the native Swiss workers, the Grütli Society (*Grütliverein*), which had more than 3,500 members in 1864 and a centre in Geneva. A "drowsy, philistine spirit" reigned in this conservative organisation.[1] On the whole the idea of the class struggle of the proletariat was foreign to it. Only some of its local branches responded to the International's call and proclaimed themselves sections of it; the leadership

[1] V. I. Lenin, "On Switzerland", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 160.

of the Grütli Society itself rejected all proposals to affiliate to the International Working Men's Association.

The Belgian educational society *Le Peuple*, founded in 1861, had a clearly anti-clerical and political character but it was not so much a worker organisation as one of the radical intelligentsia and students. The General Council and the first members of the International in Belgium established contact with it and used its newspaper *La Tribune du Peuple* to publicise the Association's statements. Many outstanding members of the International came forward from this society, including César De Paepe.

There were also workers' educational societies in Spain in the 1860s. One of the oldest was the Madrid society Development of the Arts (*El Fomento de las Artes*). Despite its title it was a kind of political club of advanced workers and the radical intelligentsia. "This society always, before 68, united Madrid workers who had political and social aspirations, and in it the men who formed the founding nucleus of the International in Spain got to know one another," Francisco Mora, a member of the circle and one of the founders of the International's section in Spain, recalled.[1]

The oldest workers' organisations, the mutual aid societies, which kept their ground only at the price of breaking away from the working-class movement's main path of development had acquired a conservative, closed character in the 1860s. Such were the numerous "friendly societies" in Great Britain,[2] which as a rule shunned the International. In some cases, however, in France for example, mutual aid societies, which were a transitional form to a trade union, became sections of the International.

The prosperous co-operative organisations in Great Britain usually did not share socialist views and in most cases had no connections with the International. Nevertheless, a number of members of the Association came from the old co-operative movement. The more numerous, though less influential co-operative organisations on the Continent were under the aegis (at the time the International was founded) either of bourgeois republicans (the *Crédit au travaill* in France, and some co-operatives in Belgium) or of the liberal bourgeoisie (in Germany).

Members of the International carried on propaganda for its principles in the co-operative societies. One line of their work was the founding of new co-operative societies in accordance with the recommendations of the Geneva Congress of 1866. In Germany sections of the Association were the initiators of a number of consumer

[1] Francisco Mora, *Historia del socialismo obrero espanol*, Imprenta de I. Calleja, Madrid, 1902, p. 46.

[2] In the 1860s they numbered nearly three million members and had assets of around £ 11 millions.

and producer organisations that proclaimed socialist aims. In Switzerland Becker worked energetically along that line. In Belgium many co-operatives were set up on the initiative of members of the International, but whereas those in Switzerland were founded on the basis of the Association's programme, in Belgium they were a kind of intermediate stage to the formation of sections.

In France and Belgium, and sometimes in French Switzerland, the broad participation of members of the International in the co-operative movement was largely due to their Proudhonist views. Many French members of the International, being under the influence of those Parisian Proudhonists who were foundation members of the Association, considered that its job was to carry out projects for people's banks, free credit, etc. In reality, all the same, the co-operative societies founded by them had little in common with utopian projects. They united workers under the banner of the Association and at the same time demonstrated to them the possibility of organising production without entrepreneurs. That experience, to which Marx attached great significance, prepared workers to take in socialist ideas. The organisations' activity in many ways went beyond the bounds of co-operative as such—they all, to one degree or another, took on a propagandist and political character. Co-operative dining-rooms, for instance, were converted into a kind of club that drew women into the working-class movement, which was particularly important.

With all that, the affiliation of trade unions to the International was, of course, of paramount importance, i.e. of the organisations with the most pronounced class character. During the years of its existence the founding and further development of trade unions was one of the most typical features of the European working-class movement. Trade unions could only be stable mass organisations in a situation of legality, or at least in the absence of emergency measures directed against organisations of that kind. The repeal of the Le Chapellier Law in France in 1864, and of the similar law in Belgium in 1866, the revolution of 1868 in Spain, and the shifts in Bismarck's labour policy in Germany created more favourable conditions than before for their development. The upsurge of the strike struggle in the early 1860s, and the drive to unite engendered by it were in turn the objective basis for this process.

It was then that the experience of British trades unions became widely known on the Continent. In the 1860s there were no workers' newspapers that did not acquaint their readers with it. Attention was paid above all to the unions' mass character, their power and organisational capacity, and their successes in the struggle for legal limitation of the working day and the raising of wages, all of which overshadowed the negative aspects of British trade unionism,

viz., the shift to the right taking place in the unions, and the development of reformist trends.

From the very start the General Council took steps to draw British trades unions into the sphere of the Association's activity. On 22 November 1864 it adopted an address to these organisations and sent delegates to the separate unions. The organisational form for trade unions' joining the International was also worked out. They could join with the rights of affiliated members and were treated as branches of the Association. Affiliation was usually decided by the executive committee of the union concerned.

One of the first trade unions to affiliate to the International was the Operative Bricklayers' Society. In March 1865 the Council sent delegates to the conference of the Amalgamated Cordwainers. Through the activity of the English members of the Council and of its delegation that negotiated with the union executives, up to 14,000 union members had affiliated to the International at the beginning of 1865.[1]

The first national conference of trades unions in Sheffield (17-21 July 1866) passed a resolution urgently recommending trades unions to join the International Working Men's Association since "it is essential to the progress and prosperity of the entire working community".[2]

By the end of 1866 several trades unions with around 25,000 members had affiliated to the International. These were not unions of factory workers employed in the basic industries but the unions of tailors, building workers, shoe-makers, etc. True, the Lancashire Block-Printers' Union joined the International in January 1867, but it was an exception. Typical of the big trade unions organising skilled workers was the position taken by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, which refused to affiliate to the International on the grounds that it engaged in political activity and opened its ranks to unskilled workers.[3] The behaviour of these unions also had an effect on the position of the most influential trade union body, the London Trades Council. The General Council of the Association negotiated with it about affiliation for a long time. Marx, Dupont, Eccarius, Shaw, and other attended meetings of the delegates of the trade unions that belonged to the London Trades Council; in the end it refused to give organisational form to its relations with the Association, although it continued to keep in contact with the General Council on matters of the strike struggle in England and on the Continent.

The London Trades Council's stand played a definite role in consolidating British trade unions on a reformist basis. The concentra-

[1] *The General Council of the First International. 1864-1866. Minutes*, p. 320.
[2] Ibid., p. 422.
[3] *The General Council of the First International 1866-1868. Minutes*, p. 298.

tion of attention wholly on such aims as electoral reform, full legalisation of trade unions (the granting of the rights of a legal person to them), and, a bit later, establishment of a nine-hour working day, coupled with the ruling class's flexible manoeuvring, caused the trade unions to lose their fighting spirit. This predominant reformist tendency, however, developed in sharp struggle with the revolutionary trend, which was represented in the English labour movement by members of the International.[1]

The shift toward reformism taking place in the trade union movement did not mean its complete break with the International. In 1867 more than 30 trade unions, numbering around 50,000 members, were already affiliated.[2] By the end of 1868 another ten trade unions had affiliated. They were only a tiny part of the English trade unions; later, however, separate unions joined the Association and contact with British trade unions (especially on matters of the strike struggle) did not cease until the end of the International's activity.

The International built firm links with trade unions in th United States. In the mid-60s there were 207 societies in 53 industries in the USA, which as a rule were quite big unions. The tendency to found amalgamated unions on a national scale also strengthened; at the beginning of the 1870s there were already 32 national unions. There arose the powerful International Ironmoulders' Union of USA and Canada (its founder was William H. Sylvis, a widely read, self-educated worker and talented organiser), the National Union of Machinists and Blacksmiths, headed by Ira Steward, the National Typographical Union, led by Andrew C. Cameron, the International Union of Ship Carpenters and Caulkers (secretary Richard F. Trevellick). These were the biggest associations that, together with the International Union of Coachmakers and the Union of Blacksmiths, established contact with the General Council in the first years of the International's existence.

On 20 August 1866 the first national workers' congress opened in Baltimore with delegates representing more than 60,000 US organised workers. This figure, in itself significant, also bore witness that a vast part of the working class remained unorganised (immigrants, the numerous farm labourers and seasonal workers, etc.). The congress founded the National Labor Union, which was joined by a number of immigrant organisations. The Union's second congress

---

[1] See V. E. Kunina, *Karl Marx and the English Labour Movement*, Moscow, 1968, Ch. 2 (in Rassian).

[2] *The General Council of the First International. 1866-1868. Minutes*, pp. 298-302.

in Chicago (August 1867) passed a resolution that signified recognition of the International Working Men's Association.

Although US trade unions did not formally affiliate to the International, the National Labor Union maintained close contact with the General Council from the beginning. Through that channel links were forged between the American and European labour movements. At the end of the 1860s, however, contacts with the General Council gradually weakened and the American trade union movement became more and more preoccupied with a range of internal problems.

In most countries on the Continent an upsurge of the trade union movement began in the second half of the 1860s. The unions themselves were founded and developed in many cases under the influence of the International's activity. That was how matters stood, in particular, in Germany, where trade unions again began to be formed in the 60s, and especially in 1869, in connection with growth of the strike movement. August Bebel, drawing on the rules of English trade unions, wrote a set of model rules for trade unions.[1] Opponents of the International Working Men's Association also organised trade unions, trying in that way to strengthen their standing with the masses.

In Switzerland unions were often formed by members of the International, beginning in 1868. As a rule they were immediately established openly as sections of the Association (by trades). In 1869 there were already 23 such unions in Geneva, 11 in Basel, eight in Lausanne and five in Zurich.[2]

In Belgium there was an activation of trade union organisation (defence societies) from 1866. In the 60s they were comparatively few (the printers', jewellers', tailors', hatters', and cigar workers' societies). These organisations got in touch with the Belgian sections of the International or directly with the General Council, during the strike struggle.

In France craft associations grew out of mutual aid societies or defence societies. They employed the experience of English trade unions, but unlike them took a revolutionary stand from the very start.

In Spain trade unions were banned before the revolution of 1868. Some, however, which had already arisen in the 1840s, had continued to exist illegally or semi-legally, mainly in Catalonia. In 1868-1870 there was vigorous growth of these organisations. In 1869 there were more than 195 craft societies, with around 25,000 members in Spain.[3] They included such big organisations as the Catalonian Society of Hand-loom Weavers, the Barcelona Federal Centre of

[1] Supplement to *Demokratisches Wochenblatt*, 1868, No. 48 (28 November).
[2] *Der Vorbote*, 1869, No. 3, S. 45-46.
[3] *La Federación*, 2 January 1870.

Workers' Societies (which united the societies of the veil weavers, carpenters and joiners, dyers, and a number of others). The strongest was the Federation of the Three Classes of Steam Mills, which united manual workers, spinners, and weavers of textile mills in Barcelona. In 1868 it has 6,000 members and in 1870 9,000.[1] Trade union organisations were founded in Madrid, Cadiz, Palma, Alcoy, etc. There was a complicated intermingling of trade unionist, co-operative, left republican (cantonalist), federalist ideas in the Spanish societies (especially in the Catalonian ones). For all that they had a militant character and took an active part in the political struggle that was developing in Spain. They joined the International at the beginning of the 70s.

Marx considered it one of the International Association's most important jobs to draw in the only workers' political organisation then existing, the General Association of German Workers founded in 1863 with the active participation of Ferdinand Lassalle.

Lassalle (1825-1864) was one of the most brilliant, yet contradictory figures in the history of the German working-class movement. A participant in the revolutionary events of 1848 in the Rhine Province, he had already then entered into contact with Marx and Engels, and proclaimed himself their disciple.

Nevertheless Lassalle was never in fact a Marxist. In philosophy he remained a Hegelian; the ideas of revolutionary class struggle, of the proletariat's world historical mission, and of the socialist reconstruction of society through transfer of political power to the working class, were alien to him. Lassalle and his followers denied the need for trade union activity, declaring it useless and even harmful since it diverted workers from the main purpose, viz. struggle for universal suffrage.

Lassalle was distinguished by enormous ambition and thirst for power. At the same time his inexhaustible energy, remarkable talent as a speaker and polemicist, and criticism of the ulcers of the social system and policies of the liberal bourgeoisie gained him wide popularity among German workers. His activity, on the one hand, fostered penetration of the German working-class movement by opportunism, but on the other hand substantially facilitated freeing of the working class from the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie and its organisation as an independent party.

On the ideological and organisational plane the General Association of German Workers was under the influence of Lassallean dogmas. Its programme was based on the idea of producers' associations relying on state aid and considered as the means of "introducing so-

[1] *La Federación*, 25 December 1870; A. Marvaud, *La question sociale en Espagne*, Paris, 1910, p. 30.

cialism". Its aim was proclaimed as the establishment of universal suffrage by peaceful and lawful means, the vote being claimed to be the sole method able fittingly to represent the interests of the German workers' estate and eliminate the class contradictions in society. The General Association denied the value of economic struggle, strikes, and trade unions, and ignored the need to draw the peasant masses into the liberation movement. Its organisational structure, namely, wide powers for the president (elected under the Rules by an absolute majority of the Association's general meeting, initially for five years, and subsequently for one year), extreme centralisation (local representatives were subordinated to the president and board and could be dismissed at any time), was very undemocratic.

Lassalle's disciples who headed the General Association after his death (above all, J. B. Schweitzer), reinforced the reformist and sectarian features of its programme and tactics. They continued Lassalle's line of trying to employ the Prussian Junker state in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and pursued a tactic of adapting the German proletariat to the Bismarckian regime. These leaders thus cut the General Association off from the international working-class movement.

And although Marx knew what the leaders of the General Association of German Workers were, he persistently tried all the same to affiliate this big working-class organisation to the International Association, and wrote about it to Liebknecht, Carl Siebel, and other of his supporters in Germany. The question of the General Association was discussed many times at meetings of the General Council. A definite step to establish contact was the collaboration of Marx, Engels, and Liebknecht in the General Association's organ *Der Social-Demokrat* (published by Schweitzer in Berlin from December 1864). The General Association's leadership, however, stubbornly refused to alter that stand. Schweitzer continued the line of compromising with the Prussian government, as was clearly demonstrated in his articles "Bismarck's Ministry" and the newspaper's general line. That led to a public break between Marx and Engels and its editors (February 1865). From that time on the efforts of Marx and his associates in Germany were directed to drawing individual members of the General Association into the International and establishing contacts with the proletarian opposition forming inside it to the Lassallean leadership.

The upswing in the European working-class movement, and the drive of the working class for unity, its still vague belief in the imminence of emancipation and readiness to struggle and sacrifice for its sake were conducive to the General Council's propaganda work for the International's ideas, and for the founding and development of its local organisations. The International's activity in turn

played an immense role in transforming these moods into revolutionary consciousness, led to a qualitative change in the frame of mind of the broad masses of the workers, and prepared for the revolutionary crisis of 1870-1871.

Enormous difficulties had to be overcome. The International had no legal status in Germany, Austro-Hungary, or France. The authorities turned a blind eye to the activity of its sections at certain periods but their members faced arrest at any moment. There were three trials of members of the International in Paris. In other, "freer" countries the police also kept a close watch on the International's sections. Joining was treated as a challenge to the authorities and official opinion.

The Russian revolutionary P. A. Kropotkin, who joined the European workers' movement at the beginning of the 1870s recalled that: "It was necessary to live among the workers to understand what influence the International's rapid growth had on them, how they believed in the movement, with what affection they spoke of it, and what sacrifices they made for it. From day to day and from year to year thousands of workers gave off their time and money to support their section, to found a newspaper, to cover the expenses of holding some national or international congress, or simply to attend meetings and demonstrations. The ennobling influence the International had also made a deep impression on me. The majority of Parisian internationalists did not drink spirits, and all gave up smoking. 'Why should I indulge this weakness?' they said. Everything petty and base disappeared, giving way to majestic and sublime."[1]

Local sections of the International were usually founded at first as a result of the contacts of members of the General Council (and above all the corresponding secretaries) with workers in the national groups of the working-class movement. The primary section, which usually united workers of different trades, was considered a base, and was treated as a kind of centre (in Switzerland they were called "mother-sections"). Its activity in recruiting new members, and propaganda, and its involvement in the practical movement led to the rise of new sections built on trade or area lines. As the movement grew national federations were born. They held their own congresses and had their own federation councils. At a later stage local federations also began to be formed. Both sections and federations usually had their own rules, supplementing the General Rules, and defining the concrete objectives of the given organisation. Federations

[1] P. A. Kropotkin, *A Revolutionary's Notes*, Moscow, 1966, p. 253 (in Russian).

also included collective members, viz., so-called adhering organisations having their own rules and objectives. In addition there were sections directly associated with the General Council. Sections and federations sent their rules and application to join to the General Council (in 1871-1872 the General Council set up a special commission to review rules). Sections and federations recognised by the General Council, and which paid dues, were granted the right to take part in the International Association's general congress (in practice the number of delegates was determined by the resources of the sections themselves). All federations (except, to some extent, in Italy) were built on a basis of combining centralism with democratic principles.

The activity of the local sections and federations was varied. They took part in the workers' practical struggle (organised strikes, demonstrations, solidarity campaigns, and so on), carried on propaganda for the International's ideas, publicised its successes, and undertook general educational measures (held lectures, debates, etc.). Working out the general objectives of the movement during preparations for the International's congresses (the shaping of their agenda and the development of a point of view on the matters put forward), and then discussion of the decisions constituted a big part of their work. Practical everyday problems were thus dealt with in close connection with matters of principle—the objectives of the movement, ways and means of emancipation, etc. Themes of the strike struggle, for example, were discussed, as were resistance to capital on the broader plane, nationalisation of the land, collective ownership, war, education, direct legislation, and so on. Marx successfully used the discussions flaring up around these themes to spread and consolidate a scientific outlook.

The International's first section in Paris was finally formed in December 1864, and united around 30 persons. Its board included, in particular, Tolain, Fribourg, Limousin, Louis-Eugène Varlin, and Zephirin Camelina. For a long time this section was the International's centre in France, and broad publicising of its ideas was carried on by efforts of the committee, with the support of a friend of Marx's, the German emigre Victor Schily. As a result new sections began to be formed both in Paris itself and in the provinces (Rouen, Lyons, Marseilles, Lille, Caen, etc.). At first they were not very numerous, due in particular to the existing legislation (meetings at which more than 20 persons were present were banned). In March 1870 the Paris sections constituted themselves a federation and elected a Federation Council. The Federation united 14 sections, of which five were trades sections, and three publicising ones. There was also a small German section in Paris. In September 1870 around 25 sections were already functioning there. Section members carried on extensive work in the mass worker organisations, many of which

were either affiliated to the International Association or in fact represented the legal form of existence of its sections.

One of the first Swiss sections of the International, the Geneva section, arose in the second half of 1864. At the beginning of October François Dupleix wrote a letter to Tolain in the name of a group of bookbinders, in which he informed Tolain of the forming of a committee in Geneva to link up with the workers of other countries, and asked for instructions. The letter was sent to the General Council.[1] This section, which included French and German workers, and workers of other nationalities, was finally formed around November. On 25 January 1865 a provisional central committee of the section of the International was formed in Switzerland, which issued a call on February 5th for the founding of new sections.[2] At the end of April 1865 the first conference was held, in which more than 200 members of the Geneva sections took part. It was decided to divide the section along linguistic lines. On 3 September a central committee of the German language sections was elected, which was headed by J. P. Becker. After the conference the process of setting up sections (often small ones) went on apace. Sections were constituted in Chaux-de-Fonds (1865) Bienne, Sonvillier, Boncourt, St. Imier, Neuchâtel, Le Locle, Parrantrui (1866), Zurich, Basel, Lausanne (1867), etc. In 1868 26 sections were already functioning in Geneva with more than 4,000 members. From 1867 their work was co-ordinated by a Geneva cantonal committee. In January 1869 the more than 30 French language sections set up a Romance Federation, which had its own organ *L'Égalité*. In 1870 sections were formed in the *High Jura*, altogether around 13, with about 700 members.

The Swiss organisations, above all the German language group of sections, functioned as a propaganda and organisational staff, for Switzerland was the only country on the Continent where sections existed quite legally; it was also a centre of revolutionary-democratic and worker emigres. The role of the International in Switzerland was due, first and foremost, to the tireless energies of J. P. Becker, a brilliant propagandist and organiser, who became a workers' leader of international calibre. Becker and the central committee of the German language sections led by him were linked with the workers of Germany, Austria, and the United States. They also organised contacts with Italy, Spain, Russia, Greece, and Turkey.

Sections began to arise in Germany at the turn of 1865-1866, under the influence of Wilhelm Liebknecht and other former members of the Communist League associated with Marx, viz. Karl Klings, Carl Klein, and Paul Stumpf. The activity of J. P. Becker played

[1] See *The General Council of the First International. 1864-1866. Minutes*, p. 60.

[2] *Nordstern*, 11 February 1865.

a great role; the central committee of the German language sections in Switzerland was also considered to some extent to be the centre for German sections.

One of the first sections formed was in Sollingen. In 1866 sections arose in Berlin (its organisers were the shoe-makers Theodor Metzner and August Vogt and Siegfried Mayer, a student at the Technical High School, who correspondend with Marx from November 1865), Magdeburg, Cologne, and Leipzig; in 1876 in Mainz, Brunswick, Wiesbaden, Woldenbüttel, Hildesheim, Duisburg, and Dresden; in 1868 in Siegkretz (Prussian Rhineland), Lörrach, and Säckingen (Baden); in 1869 in Barmen and Elberfeld, and Nuremberg. Sections also functioned in Fürth, Tübingen, and Bielefeld, and several towns in Silesia. Members of the League of German Workers' Associations and the General Association of German Workers belonged to the sections.

In spite of the fact that the International's sections in Germany were small they played a not unimportant role in the preparations for founding the German Social-Democratic Labour Party.

The International's sections in the Austro-Hungarian Empire were closely linked with the working-class movement in Germany. Although the information preserved on their formation is scanty, it is known, however, that they were functioning in Vienna, Graz, and Wiener Neustadt in 1868. They also existed in Pest, Brno, Bratislava, Asch, Trieste, and Timisoara (Transylvania). Their activity prepared the ground for the organisation of the Social Democratic Party, which already had around 20,000 members in 1869 (6,000 in the Czech lands and 2,500 in Hungary).[1]

In Belgium the General Council's plenipotentiary originally was Léon Fontaine, a bourgeois democrat close to Mazzini. He did nothing practical, however, to set up a section. In 1865 Marx was appointed corresponding secretary for Belgium. That immediately altered the situation. Contacts were established with César De Paepe, a leading figure in the Belgium working-class movement. On 17 July 1865 the first section was founded in Brussels, which became the actual centre of the movement. In 1865, too, sections came into being in Liège, Verviers, Ghent, Namur, Antwerp, and other towns. In April 1867 the foundation of a Belgian Federation was announced. At the end of 1868 the Federation numbered more than 60 sections, some of which had several thousand members. By 1870 the Belgian Federation had become one of the biggest, and united tens of thousands of members of sections and affiliated unions.

The documents of the International became known in the United States in 1864. Much was done to propagate the ideas contained in

[1] *Der Vorbote*, 1869, No. 2, S. 26-27.

them by Siegfried Meyer and August Vogt, members of the International Association who had emigrated to the USA in 1867, together with Joseph Weydemeyer, who was in regular correspondence with Marx. They promoted the above-mentioned New York Communist Club of German Workers entry into the International. In 1869 German sections of the International had been founded in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and Milwaukee. French sections arose at approximately the same time. The biggest development of sections in the United States was at the beginning of the 1870s.

In Spain the first two sections of the International Association were founded in Barcelona and Madrid. For a long time the lack of clarity in their programme prevented their becoming mass organisations. Only after the Basel Congress (1869) did the Spanish sections begin to grow rapidly. From the end of 1869 to the beginning of 1870 sections and local federations were set up in Palma de Mallorca, Bilbao, Cadiz, Valencia, Vittoria, Malaga, Valladolid, Cartagena, Santa Nder, and Alcoy. The Madrid sections which had more than a thousand members in February 1870, formed a federation. In June of the same year, the Spanish Federation of the International was constituted at the first congress in Barcelona, uniting more than 150 sections in 36 towns, and several affiliated craft organisations. Basically these were sections organised on occupational lines (in Jaén, Andalusia), the first section of agricultural labourers was set up).

At that time the Russian revolutionary movement began to merge with the general revolutionary stream. A tendency to converge on the European workers' movement was manifested more and more distinctly among Russian revolutionaries, especially among the followers of N.G. Chernyshevsky. Interest in the ideas of scientific communism grew in that connection. The first Russian translation of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was published illegally in the 1860[1]. Much correspondence and many articles acquainting readers with the development of socialist ideas and the European workers' movement also appeared in the Russian censured press.

The journal *Sovremennik* (Modern Times) played a big role. In 1861 it published extracts from Engels' book *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, translated by N. V. Shelgunov. *Sovremennik* published detailed analyses of the ideas of Lassalle and Proudhon, and information on events in the workers' movement abroad. In 1864 the liberal newspaper *Golos* (The Voice) published a note on the founding of the International. And in 1868 and 1869 it published detailed despatches on the Brussels and Basel congresses. Reports on the

[1] The translator is thought to be Mikhail Bakunin. There are grounds, however, for supposing that it was someone else, possibly N. N. Lyubavin. (See *Literary Heritage*, Vol. 63, Moscow, 1956, pp. 700-01 (in Russian).)

International were carried by *Russki invalid* (1865), *Russki vestnik* (Russian Herald) (1867), and other newspapers[1].

A group of young Russian emigres in Switzerland worked most actively in the spirit of the First International. The most brilliant figure among them, and the real leader of the group, was a follower of Chernyshevsky's, A. A. Serno-Solovyevich, a member of the Central Committee of the *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Freedom) society, and one of the leaders of the revolutionary movement in Petersburg in 1861-1862. Escaping arrest by chance, he went to Geneva in 1862 to establish connections with Russian students. He was soon drawn into the movement in Switzerland and became an active participant in the work of the Geneva section of the International.

The socio-economic situation in Russia, which took a path of rapid capitalist development after the reform of 1861, presented absorbing interest for Marx (especially during work on *Capital*). He could not conceive completing the section of his work dealing with ground rent, without studying agrarian relations in Russia and the fate of the Russian village commune.

The German publicist Sigismud Borkheim gave Marx substantial help in obtaining information about Russia, having extended his knowledge of Russian for that purpose, on Engels' advice. Among other material on Russia that caught his eye was Serno-Solovyevich's pamphlet *Nashi domashniye dela* (Our Home Affairs), published in 1866, in which he spoke of the situation in the Russian revolutionary movement, and in particular about the polemic between the various generations of Russian revolutionaries. Borkheim sent the author of the pamphlet a proposal to translate it into German and a request for additional information on the Russian figures unknown to him. His letter has not been preserved, but from Serno-Solovyevich's reply, dated 18 October 1867, it is clear that it concerned N. G. Chernyshevsky. This reply was apparently the document from which Marx and his closest associates first learned of the great Russian revolutionary democrat.

"Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov", Serno-Solovyevich wrote, "are two of the greatest publicists of young Russia. It is to them—and no one will dispute this—that we owe the movement which is taking place now in Russia and which sooner or later—in any case I hope so—will lead to an explosion....

"Chernyshevsky's articles were printed in separate issues of *Sovremennik*, of which he was the editor, but which has ceased its existence. It is difficult incidentally to catch his meaning—that is, as regards

[1] See B. S. Itenberg, *The First International and Revolutionary Russia*, Moscow, 1964; *The Literary Legacy of K. Marx and F. Engels. History of Its Publication and Study in the USSR*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 34-38 (both in Russian).

his political articles—because, in order to get round the censorship, he wrote exactly the contrary to what he thought. The readers understood him. This man has great and quite unique talent, I would even say that he is a real genius."[1]

It is unlikely that Serno-Solovyevich's reply did not reach Marx immediately, as he met Borkheim frequently at that very time on various matters. But even if it did not, Marx very soon, all the same, received a written resumé of the pamphlet made for him by Borkheim with these new data included. Evidence of the interest he showed in its author is the fact that, in December 1867, he sent Serno-Solovyevich a presentation copy of Volume I of *Capital* through J. P. Becker.

A year later Serno-Solovyevich as a member of the committee organising publication of the International's newspaper *L'Égalité* in Geneva, sent Marx a letter. "I beg you in this case as well to help the cause you have defended all your life," he wrote inviting Marx to collaborate with the newspaper[2]. Marx refused regular collaboration, pleading pressure of work, but promised help the editors at any time.

Serno-Solovyevich was the first member of the younger generation of Russian revolutionaries with whom Marx had come into direct contact. The link was soon broken, however, by Serno-Solovyevich's grave illness and death.

Meanwhile, in the middle of October 1868, Marx learned that it was proposed to publish a Russian edition of *Capital* in Petersburg. He was informed of this by N. F. Danielson, the future translator of all three volumes. This first letter laid the basis for Danielson's extensive correspondence with the founders of Marxism, which continued to the last days of Engels'life. During those long years Danielson supplied Marx and, after his death, Engels with data of all kinds on the economy of Russia.

In the autumn of 1869 Danielson sent Marx the book *Polozheniye rabochego klassa v Rossii* (The Condition of the Working Class in Russia), by N. Flerovsky (the pen-name of V. V. Bervi). "I am sending you this book", he wrote, "in the hope that it will give you needed material for the next parts of your classical work".[3] In order to read Flerovsky's book, Marx as his wife wrote, "began fervently to study Russian".[4] He did so the more doggedly because he wanted to acquaint

---

[1] The letter was reproduced in the foreword to the German translation of Serno-Solovyevich's pamphlet, printed in Leipzig in 1871.

[2] See *K. Marx, F. Engels and Revolutionary Russia*, Moscow, 1967, pp. 161-62 (in Russian).

[3] Ibid., p. 168.

[4] Letter from Jenny Marx to Engels of about 17 January 1870.—In: Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1973, Bd. 22, S. 705.

himself with the works of Chernyshevsky. A copy of Herzen's *Tyurmy i ssylki* (Prisons and Exiles) which Engels had used to study Russian served for the first lessons; the translations and Russian roots that Engels had written in the margins eased the learning process for Marx. On 10 February 1870 he wrote to Engels with satisfaction that he had already read 150 pages of Flerovsky.

At the end of his work on the book Marx was reading quite fluently, making notes on the substance of his reading. He underscored places that gave evidence of the existence of elements of capitalist exploitation in Russia (e.g. systems of truck payment), on the break up of the peasant communes, and the development of commodity production. Critical comments are to be found in the margins on Flerovsky's characteristic idealisation of the village communes; and his Pan-Slavist attitudes. Against Flerovsky's desire for capitalist and worker to feel themselves "comrade" and "brother" rather than "employer and employed", Marx wrote a marginal note in Saxon dialect: We only lack such brothers, the devil take them!"[1]

Flerovsky's extensive work, bristling with facts, gave Marx what he could only sometimes find in other sources distorted by official optimism or subjective illusions. "After studying his work you come to a profound conviction that the most stupendous social revolution is inevitable and close in Russia—naturally in the elementary forms that correspond to Muscovy's contemporary level of development", Marx wrote to Paul Lafargue. "That is good news. Russia and England are the two great pillars of the present European system. All the rest are of second-rate importance, even *la belle France et la savante Allemagne*."[2]

After Flerovsky's book, Marx dipped into the third volume of the Geneva collection of Chernyshevsky's works, which included his "Additions and Comments on the First Book of John Stuart Mill's Political Economy". In the summer of the same year Marx ordered the fourth volume from Geneva. A year later he wrote a propos of the work of Flerovsky and Chernyshevsky: "The intellectual movement now taking place in Russia testifies to the fact that fermentations is going on deep below the surface. Minds are always connected by invisible threads with the body of the people."[3]

Marx saw what a high revolutionary potential was hidden in the vast oppressed masses when the tasks of the bourgeois revolution had not been solved. At the same time theoretical consideration and practical experience suggested that it needed an advanced class, organised and conscious of its historical mission, to convert this

[1] *Archives of Marx and Engels*, Vol. IV, Moscow, 1935, pp. 372-78.
[2] Letter to Laura and Paul Lafargue, 5 March 1870.—In: Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 32, S. 659.
[3] Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 241.

potential into translational movement. Thus, in the general panorama of the European revolution, Russia no longer figured in the image of counter-revolutionary tsarism, the bastion of reactionary forces, but as a powerful reserve of the international proletariat at the moment of the decisive battle against capital.

At the beginning of 1870 a Russian section began to take shape in Geneva. One of its organisers was the Russian revolutionary N. I. Utin, a pupil of Chernyshevsky's. Having managed to escape abroad after being sentenced to death for revolutionary activity, he founded a journal *Narodnoye delo* (The People's Cause) in Geneva in 1868. Around him a group of Russian revolutionary emigres formed. On 12 March 1870, N. Utin, A. Trusov, the Bartenevs, husband and wife, E. Dmitriyeva-Tomanovskaya, and A. Korvin-Krukovskaya sent a letter to London, informing of the constituting of a Russian section (and attaching its rules). Requesting Marx to take on representation of this section in the General Council, the members of its committee—N. Utin, A. Trusov, and V. Netov (Bartenev)—wrote: "Brought up in the spirit of the ideas of our teacher Chernyshevsky, condemned in 1864, for his work, to hard labour in Siberia, we greet your exposition of socialist principles and your critique of industrial feudalism with pleasure... The Russian democratic youth today have the opportunity to express their profound gratitude to you, through the lips of their exiled brethren, for the help you have given our cause by your theoretical and practical propaganda."[1] Marx liked the rejection of Pan-Slavic illusions in the young Russian revolutionaries' letter, their understanding of the indissolubility of the historical fate of Russia and Western Europe, and their direct dissociation from Bakunin. He therefore accepted the committee's commission with pleasure.

In his official reply Marx expressed approval of the Russian section's programme in which they said that the tsarist yoke oppressing Poland is a hindrance to the political and social freedom of both peoples—the Russians as well as the Poles. "You might add," Marx wrote, "that ... in working on breaking Poland's chains, Russian socialists take on themselves the lofty task of destroying the military regime; that is essential as a precondition for the overall emancipation of the European proletariat."[2]

Marx concluded this letter, which was published in the section's

[1] *K. Marx, F. Engels and Revolutionary Russia*, p. 169.

[2] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 172. Marx's relations with the Russian section of the International are discussed in detail in B. P. Kozmin, *The Russian Section of the First International*, Moscow, 1957; N. K. Karatayev, *The Economic Programme of the Russian Section of the First International*, A Collection of Documents, Moscow, 1959; B. S. Itenberg, op. cit., and other works (all in Russian).

organ *Narodnoye delo*, with the following words: "Such works as Flerovsky's and those of your teacher Chernyshevsky do real honour to Russia and prove that your country is also beginning to take part in the movement of our age."[1]

The great merit of the small but very active group of Russian members of the First International was that, at a time when a sharp struggle against anarchism and for proletarian party principle was beginning to take shape in the international working-class movement, they opposed Bakunin and supported the Marxist, revolutionary nucleus in the International. At the beginning of the 1870s the Russian section was already straining to forge links in Russia and to attract like-minded people there to the First International. At the same time its members by no means ignored the workers' movement that was beginning in Russia; on the contrary, they were rather inclined to exaggerate its importance, considering that the social revolution in Russia might take the form of a general strike[2]. The real historical role of the proletariat, however, could not yet be understood by the Russian members of the International Working Men's Association.

One of the International's most important spheres of activity was the founding and development of a workers' press. In the years of its existence more than a hundred newspapers were published that were the organs, officially or in fact, of sections and federations of the International Working Men's Association[3].

Never before had the worker press had such development. There was a rise in circulation, while the geographical distribution was broadened; worker newspapers and journals were published in England and Austro-Hungary (including Pest and Trieste), in Belgium and Germany, in Holland and Denmark, in Italy and Spain, in Portugal and Serbia, in France and Switzerland, in Sweden, the United States, and Australia; and their content became incomparably more profound.

The publication of each newspaper was a veritable feat. Enormous material difficulties had to be overcome, as they were subject to governmental persecution (fines and seizure, and direct suppression). And there were no few complexities on the ideological plane. The collaboration of consistent proletarian revolutionaries in the bour-

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 173.

[2] See B. P. Kozmin, op. cit., p. 265.

[3] *Répértoire international des sources pour l'étude des mouvements sociaux aux XIX^e et XX^e siècle*, Vol. I. *La Première Internationale Périodiques*, Paris, 1958; *The Press of the First International and the Paris Commune*, Union Catalogue of Publications, Held in the Libraries of the USSR, Part I, Moscow, 1969 (in Russian).

geois-democratic press and the organs of the British trades unions was no easy affair, and was often broken off.

As a result many worker newspapers did not last long—a few years, a year, a few months. Sometimes only a few issues could be brought out. In any case, however, the publication of a newspaper was a great victory for the workers and a demonstration of growth of their consciousness and organisational capacity. Not one of the International's organs could, in fact, have held out without the constant help of the masses of the workers. The editors, too, toiled with dedication, in the overwhelming majority of cases without any remuneration for their work. During the years of the International's existence, it developed scores of proletarian publicists, many of whom were workers by origin.

The first "thick" monthly workers' journal *Der Vorbote*, which played an immense organisational and propagandist role and served to educate and rally thousands of workers who could read German, was published all alone, in fact, by J. P. Becker, a man no longer young and burdened with a family. Becker gathered and translated material from other newspapers, wrote most of the theoretical and survey articles and the historical ones (in particular, he wrote a series of articles on the history of the International), dealt with the journal's correspondence and all its business affairs, and read and corrected the proofs. The Spanish printing worker José Mesay, self-educated, though himself in extremely difficult circumstances in 1873 (up to then he had been helped by two or three men), brought out the weekly newspaper *La Emancipaciòn*, which Marx thought one of the International's best organs. Mesay gathered all the material for the paper, compiled a chronicle of events, translated articles and documents from French (including *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, excerpts from *Capital* and *The Poverty of Philosophy*), carried on correspondence, dealt with financial matters, and at the same time set the paper up in type. The Belgian shoe-maker Philippe Koenen also published the Antwerp *De Werker* almost single-handed.

The editors or editorial boards of the International's organs were responsible to their sections or federations. In some cases they were teected at congresses and were considered leaders, together with lhe federations' councils or committees, of the organisation (the organ of the Romance federation *L'Egalité* and that of the German Social Democratic Workers' Party *Der Volksstaat*). In a case of conflict, when a paper did not express the federation's stand, the latter could change its editors.

In addition to items about local events and articles on general problems of the workers' movement, the papers published documents of the General Council and reports of its meetings, documents and reports of the work of their own federations, reports on strike battles

and subscriptions on behalf of strikers, on the position of labouring men, on repressions and government persecution, on the forming of sections and the appearance of new organs of the International Working Men's Association, and gave surveys of the proletarian movement. These reviews were a real international diary of the workers' struggle, and did much to foster proletarian internationalism. Like the whole movement, the working-class press overcame local, narrow craft exclusiveness and isolation.

Responsibility of editorial boards, the obligation to publish statements of the General Council and the organisation concerned, like the mass character of the papers itself, marked a new stage in the evolution of the proletarian press.

The General Council gave much help to development of the press. It did not confine itself to financial support. The International links of editorial boards were developed and consolidated. Exchange of copies of newspapers and delivery of the General Council's materials were organised. Marx and Engels themselves translated and distributed the most interesting items from the local press. They also collaborated with dozens of organs, wrote articles for them, and gave them their works for republication.

Marx and Engels gave great assistance in establishing the daily *Der Volksstaat*—the organ of German Social-Democrats—the Eisenach Party founded in 1869. They constantly called on German Social-Democrats to function as a section of the international working-class movement and not to shut themselves off from the principled struggle in the International[1].

From the very start of the Association Marx did everything he could so that the General Council would have its own central organ. At first, of course, hopes were placed on already existing publications, mainly trades unionist. Contact was established from the autumn of 1864 with the *Bee-Hive Newspaper*, the weekly of the London trades unions, published from 1861 to 1876 (in some years the weekly was called simply *The Bee-Hive*). Like most of the organs of the trades union movement, it functioned on the basis of a joint stock company. Its publisher George Potter owned a considerable number of shares and considered himself the boss. Other shareholders—representatives of liberal trades unionism (G. Trupp and R. Hartwell)—were also on the editorial board. On 22 November 1864 the General Council

[1] See Marx's and Engels' letters to Wilhelm Liebknecht, August Bebel, and A. Hepner, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence* and Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975; E. Kundel, "Die Mitarbeit von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels am Zentralorgan der Eisenacher Partei *Der Volksstaat*".—In: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung. Sonderheft zum 150, Geburtstag von Karl Marx*, Berlin, 1968.

decided to regard the paper as its organ, but collaboration ran into difficulties at the very beginning. Potter held up publication of items and arbitrarily altered the texts. Attempts to buy shares so as to influence the composition of the editorial board failed. The General Council began to look for other ways of creating an English organ of the International Working Men's Association.

In the summer of 1865 efforts were made to acquire the former organ of the miners' trade union *The Miner and Workman's Advocate*, whose owner J. B. Leno was a member of the General Council. This attempt, too, ended in failure. *The Workman's Advocate*, which the London Conference of 1865 declared the Association's organ, also did not prove a reliable support. Bourgeois radical elements soon got the upper hand in its editorial board. The paper was renamed *The Commonwealth*, and was closed entirely in July 1867.

From February 1871 the weekly of the workers of the East End of London, the *Eastern Post* (published from 18 October 1868 to 29 December 1872) became the Association's organ, and from May 1872 to May 1873 the London weekly *The International Herald* (published from March 1872 to October 1873). Until the withdrawal of its publisher and editor W. H. Riley from the working-class movement (in the summer of 1873) the paper played a big role in the ideological and organisational struggle in the British federation of the International's sections.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN PRACTICE. DEVELOPMENT OF A PROGRAMME OF PROLETARIAN ACTION

An immense achievement of the proletariat of Europe and America in the years of the International was its joint actions in support of the strike movement. It was quite natural that the first examples of the international proletariat's unity of action should occur precisely in the sphere of economic struggle, where the opposition of class interests was most visibly displayed and could be understood by every worker from his own personal life experience.

The European workers' strike struggle itself evolved over five or six years, in a situation of mounting revolutionary crisis, from isolated, sporadic strikes into class battles in which the workers' cohorts, rallied under the banner of the International, were opposed by the full power of capital, relying on the armed force of the bourgeois state. The rapid rise in class consciousness and widespread feeling of international solidarity that characterised the proletariat's economic struggle in those years are incomprehensible if allowance is not made for the powerful organisational influence that the advanced workers in each country, and their militant staff, the General Council of the International in London, had on the masses.

The minutes of the General Council show that the initiator of the struggle for unity of action of the international proletariat in the strike struggle was Marx. As corresponding secretary for Germany he read out a letter at the General Council's meeting on 25 April 1865 from the leadership of the Berlin Compositors' Union in which they reported a strike of 500 compositors in Leipzig, who were fighting for a rise in wages. The Berlin Compositors' Union was one of the few organisations in which Wilhelm Liebknecht had succeeded in developing propaganda for the International's ideas in the autumn of 1864. "The undersigned administrative committee addresses you, therefore, dear citizen, and calls upon you to induce the International Working Men's Association, and especially the London Printer's Union, to interest themselves in the struggle of their Leipzic brethren to do something for them, to make subscriptions for them.... Every working men's movement, every strike, has an international significance, that, in fact, the immediately and locally engaged working men do battle for the whole of their class; that the bond of fraternity must embrace all working men, and that the Working Men's International Association has assuredly risen to the level of this idea."[1]

From that moment encouragement of the strike movement became a permanent trend in the work of the General Council and the International's local sections.

An indispensable condition of success was to overcome the negative attitude toward strikes that still prevailed in various strata of the working class. Many saw strikes as an infringement of the free right to work and an encroachment on the normal course of production (this was the view held by many Proudhonists and the most backward trade unionists). Others declared the strike struggle to be a senseless waste of effort and means (that was the point of view of Lassalleans and of that part of the English workers who were under the influence of bourgeois vulgar economists). Both stands amounted in essence to a preaching of passive submission to capitalist exploitation.

Marx used the discussion on trade unions and strikes that arose in the General Council in the spring of 1865 to equip its members with a proper understanding of the place of economic struggle in the proletariat's emancipation movement. "There reigns now on the Continent a real epidemic of strikes, and a general clamour for a rise of wages," he said in his preliminary remarks to his report *Wages, Price and Profit*. "You, as the head of the International Association, ought to have settled convictions upon this paramount question."[2]

---

[1] *Bee-Hive Newspaper*, 29 April, 1865.

[2] Karl Marx, "Wages, Price and Profit", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 31

The resolution, moved at the end of the discussion, called on trades unions to use "their organised forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system."[1]

While mercilessly criticising reformist theories and manifestations of reformist trends in the practical work of the working-class movement, Marx by no means denied the necessity and usefulness of the struggle for partial demands; his great contribution was that he destroyed the hypnotic effect of the "iron law of wages" on working men's consciousness. It was in this report, read to members of the General Council in June 1865, that he first promulgated one of the vitally important conclusions of his economic theory, namely: that only the workers' stubborn resistance prevented the capitalist from continuously depressing their living and working conditions. "The matter resolves itself into a question of the respective powers of the combatants," Marx declared to the General Council.[2]

In March and April 1866 a big strike of journeyman tailors, who were fighting for a rise in wages, broke out in London. The General Council widely informed the International's sections on the Continent about it, through its corresponding secretaries, and got special appeals published in their press organs calling on local workers not to take jobs in England. They thus succeeded in upsetting the employers' calculations and the latter were forced to make concessions. This first success considerably helped enhance the standing and influence of the International Working Men's Association[3].

General Council members took it upon themselves to talk with workers arriving from abroad, carried on propaganda among them for the International's ideas and persuaded them not to undermine the struggle of their English comrades. The General Council often found funds to return arriving workers home, or undertook to find them other work in England. In the summer of 1866 delegates of the Council — Paul Lafargue and Eugène Dupont took part together with two English members—in settling a conflict between English and Belgian navvies building a railway line, and negotiated so successfully that the secretary of the United Excavators' Society invited the Belgians to join the union, declaring that his members were above national prejudices[4].

The strike of the Parisian bronze workers in the spring of 1867 was a glorious page in the history of the European proletariat.[5]

---

[1] Ibid., p. 76.
[2] Ibid., p. 73.
[3] *Tribune du Peuple*, 29 April, 1866.
[4] *The General Council of the First International. 1866-1868. Minutes*, p. 54.
[5] *Historique de la grève du bronze*, Paris, 1867.

This strike, which occurred in the course of a struggle for firm piece rates, took on the character of a decisive action for the rights of trade unions. As soon as the united employers demanded dissolution of the Mutual Credit Society of Bronze Workers, founded in 1866, under threat of a lockout, the strikers sent three delegates to London, who were joined by representatives of the International's Paris section. "We invite you in the name of the Association to make a great effort on behalf of a large number of Parisian working men, who make application to their London brethren, through the medium of the International Association," the committee of the Paris section wrote to the General Council".[1] The Council's members got permission from the leadership of London trades unions to take a collection among English workers for the Parisian strikers; help was also given by the International's sections in Belgium and Switzerland. The broad solidarity movement sustained the fighting spirit of those involved in the strike and undermined the position of the employers, who agreed to introduce uniform rates. The loans obtained by the Parisian bronze workers from their class brothers were repaid within a few months.

Less well known was the strike of Paris journeyman tailors that took place about the same time. In March 1867 a movement began among the workers of Parisian tailors' shops for a rise in wages and the introduction of firm rates for separate operations. The extent of this movement, which received the International's support, alarmed the French authorities. Under pressure of the employers legal proceedings were instituted against the Paris Fraternal Solidarity and Mutual Credit Association of Journeyman Tailors founded in April 1867. Its leaders were accused of forming a prohibited society; big fines were imposed on them, and the Association itself was dissolved. In spite of this defeat, the strike and the trial, which were widely reported in the press, enhanced the standing of the International, which had come forward as the spokesman and defender of workmen's right to their own organisation.

The awareness of the objectives of international proletarian solidarity that had already been observed then in the International is given evidence by the appeal issued in Berlin in connection with the long strike of London tailors in 1867:

"The Council of the International Working-men's Association has appealed to the Berlin tailors for pecuniary aid. The case of the London tailors is not a matter of charity, it is a matter of duty. They have conscientiously entered upon a giant struggle against capital, well knowing that if they are defeated theirs will be a sorry lot for years to come, and it will re-act upon the whole labouring

[1] *The General Council of the First International*, op. cit., p. 352.

population, at least in England, since it is not simply a contest, between operative and master tailors, but a struggle of labour against the domination of capital. May the working-men of Berlin show that they understand the importance of the solidarity of the working-men as well as their English compeers, who prove it by their continuous contributions. The working-men's interests are everywhere the same."[1]

The class struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie was getting sharper with each passing year[2]. During the strikes of Basel ribbon-weavers and Geneva printers in 1869 the Swiss republican government openly took the side of the manufacturers, putting an armed force at their disposal. During the strikes of Belgian iron-workers in Seraing, and coal-miners in Borinage (1869), Welsh miners (1869), and French mineworkers in St. Etienne (1870), regular troops were thrown against unarmed workers.

The strength of proletarian solidarity shown during the strike struggle remained an enigma for the bourgeois press, which spread all kinds of lies about the International's "funds" that allegedly gave it the opportunity to "incite workers to strike". Eccarius, the secretary of the General Council, explained in an official statement that "the Association, as such, never interferes in trade union matters, but it uses its influence, when appealed to, in cases of strikes and lockouts, to prevent the workmen of one country being used as industrial mercenaries against the workmen of another; and in cases of need it solicits pecuniary aid."[3]

A first result of the developing practical movement of international solidarity was the Geneva Congress' adoption, in September 1866, of the proposals formulated by Marx in the "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council. Different Questions". The matters covered by this document were a comprehensive programme for the proletariat's social and economic struggle in the decades ahead. They contained demands for an eight-hour working day and limitation of children's and female labour, expressed basic ideas about technological training and co-operative labour, and proposed a scheme of inquiry into the position of the working class. The section on trade unions brought out the significance and objectives of these most mass organisations of the proletariat, class in their nature, aimed at the general interests of the "downtrodden

---

[1] *The Commonwealth*, July 20, 1867.

[2] Marx noted in 1869 that the employers were converting conflicts with the workers into "a state crusade against the International Working Men's Association". (*The General Council of the First International. 1868-1870. Minutes*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 329.)

[3] Ibid., p. 317.

millions" rather than at the narrow selfish interests of separate groups of workmen.[1]

The platform of economic struggle formulated by Marx for the 1866 Geneva Congress drew on theoretical conclusions deduced from more than twenty years' observation of the working-class movement of Europe and America. But the delegates at the congress, when they voted for these conclusions, saw them as a direct lesson of the just experienced strike battles. Marx wrote about this platform as follows to Dr. Ludwig Kugelmann (9 October 1866): "I deliberately restricted it to those points which allow of immediate agreement and concerted action by the workers, and give direct nourishment and impetus to the requirements of the class struggle and the organisation of the workers into a class."[2]

Generalising the practical movement's experience, Marx showed in the "Instructions" that even such elementary demands as limitation of the working day, unification of rates of pay, factory inspection, etc., could only really be met through legislative measures. In gaining them from the bourgeois state the working class did not in any way "fortify governmental power". "On the contrary, they transform that power, now used against them, into their own agency. They effect by a general act what they would vainly attempt by a multitude of isolated individual efforts."[3] Polemicising indirectly in this way against French Proudhonists and certain trade unionists who called on the workers to refrain from political struggle, Marx at the same time sharply criticised social reformers (in the special point on the organisation of co-operative labour) who thought to transform capitalist society, dispensing with transfer of state power from the hands of capitalists and landlords to those of the producers themselves[4].

The resolutions of the Geneva Congress, which firmly tied up the proletariat's economic and political struggle into one indissoluble whole, showed precisely, as Lenin wrote, "the importance of the economic struggle and warned the socialists and the workers, on the one hand, against exaggerating its importance (which the English workers were inclined to do at that time) and, on the other, against

---

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes. Vol. 2 p. 83. In the "Instructions", written at the request of the delegates travelling to Geneva, Marx summed up the results of the detailed discussion of the Congress programme at the General Council's meetings in July and August 1866. A French translation of the "Instructions" was read to the Congress as a report of the General Council.

[2] Ibid., p. 417.

[3] Ibid., pp. 80-81.

[4] Ibid., pp. 81-82.

underestimating its importance (which the French and the Germans, particularly the Lassalleans, were inclined to do."[1]

The Geneva Congress' resolutions also contained points—drafted by Marx—about the abolition of indirect taxes and standing armies, which had been put forward by the French sections of the International. There were general democratic demands that figured in many of the left programmes of the time. Formally they did not go beyond the limits of the bourgeois system, but their consistent, uncompromising carrying out by the proletariat would inevitably sap the foundations of that system. Consequently, the congress resolutions acquired the character of a political platform in which general democratic demands went hand in hand with specifically worker demands.

Adoption of the Geneva resolutions still did not mean that they were understood by all the members of the International in the mass or even by the leaders of all its sections. The fight of the proletarian revolutionary nucleus of the International against Proudhonists, Lassalleans, and liberal trade unionists did not cease; the next congresses came back again and again to the question of the relationship of economic and political struggle. But in the course of the debates some one of General Council's delegates inevitably read out the text of the Geneva resolutions, around which more and more members of the International rallied. At the time of the Basel Congress in 1869 the need for the working class' organised economic struggle and the usefulness of trade unions were already generally acknowledged. In France and Germany the trade union movement was developing on a wide scale and militant traditions of revolutionary trade unions had begun to be built up, to counterpoise English liberal trade unionism.

The platform that the General Council and the First International's organisations generally defended in the main was the most progressive and most universal programme of action in the economic, social, and political fields not only for the proletariat but also for its potential allies—the labouring masses of the petty bourgeoisie of town and country.

The resolutions of the 1866 Geneva Congress, and certain decisions of subsequent congresses that supplemented them, can be considered the International's minimum programme; at the same time they lacked the concrete political demands typical of other documents of the kind coming from Marx's pen[2]. This was due to the impossi-

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 176.

[2] See, for example, "Demands of the Communist Party in Germany", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, pp. 3-7, and "Address of the Land and Labour League to the Working Men and Women of Great Britain and Ireland", *The General Council of the First International. 1868-1870. Minutes*, p. 350.

bility of advancing concrete political demands in the programme of an international proletarian organisation aiming to exist legally in countries with very different, though basically bourgeois regimes. The maximum that could be achieved was the paragraph of the Rules of the International making it incumbent for branches and sections, "as far as their influence may extend, [to] take the initiative... in all matters tending to the general progressive improvement of public life".[1]

Acting in accordance with this idea in relation to local circumstances, workers in the International founded the Reform League in Great Britain in 1865. The programme of the Saxon People's Party drafted with the participation of A. Bebel and W. Liebknecht as an election programme for the North German Reichstag, also had a similar character.[2] This programme ensured the German workers success in 1867. Liebknecht and Bebel were elected to the North German Reichstag; for the first time since the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* the best representatives of the German working class had acquired a national tribune. Lashing out at the rightist deputies on 17 October 1867 Liebknecht declared: "I am not speaking to you in this place, where alone in Prussia there is free speech: I say it to you openly, I am speaking to the people, out there."[3] His speeches and his bold criticism of Bismarck's regime, cloaking itself in constitutional institutions, received high praise from Marx.

In addition to the minimum programme a conception of a maximum programme, too, began to take shape among the most advanced members of the International from 1867 on, the carrying out of which posited resolute rejection of the principle of private property and of the capitalist system itself, and led to the understanding of the socialist principles of the society of the future.

Marx saw the International's successes as only the beginning of the road. He set it a broad objective—to further the moulding of a socialist consciousness in the international proletariat. When

---

[1] *The General Council of the First International. 1866-1868. Minutes*, p. 268. After the Paris Commune the Geneva Congress of 1873 on the initiative of J. P. Becker adopted the following resolution which had the same meaning: "Recommending that the working class participate in any political action with the object of its emancipation, the congress at the same time affords comrades in different countries freedom to act as required by the prevailing situation" (*La Première Internationale*, Vol. IV, Paris, 1971, p. 223).

[2] In programmes of this kind the name "International" was not mentioned, as a rule; however, in the press of the International they were referred to as programmes recognising the principles of the Brotherhood (*The General Council of the First International. 1868-1870. Minutes*, p. 53; *Der Vorbote*, 1867, No. 2, S. 29; 1867, No. 3, S. 46-48).

[3] *Die I. Internationale in Deutschland (1864-1872)*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1964, S. 186.

compiling appeals or draft resolutions commissioned by the General Council, he invariably tied up the workers' separate demands and various forms of their struggle with the main aim of the proletarian movement—the overthrow of capitalism and the building of a socialist society. Up to 1868, however, the cardinal question of socialist transformation, namely abolition of private property in the means of production, was not yet directly posed in any document. Before that became possible it was necessary to overcome the illusions of those semi-artisan strata of the working class who saw in private ownership of tools, and a small workshop or a bit of land, a guarantee of the petty producer's independence.

Every day life refuted the myth of the alleged independent position of the petty producer, but in order to understand what was happening the individual workman's everyday worldly experience was insufficient. Theoretical thought was required, able to generalise collective experience and grasp the laws of capitalism's development. Marx's economic doctrine came to the European workers' aid just when the most advanced of them had already been prepared to accept this help. Propaganda for the separate propositions of Marxist political economy was carried on from the beginning in the International by Marx himself and by his closest associates. The appearance of Volume I of *Capital* in September 1867, containing a scientific substantiation of the possibility and inevitability of proletarian revolution, speeded up concentration of the Marxist core in the International and prepared the way for the adoption of a socialist programme.

The struggle of trends sharpened within the International, reflecting how European workers were overcoming petty-bourgeois sectarian and reformist views. The delegates who assembled at the third congress in Brussels (1868) had to decide whether the International would go ahead along the path of proletarian socialism that had been outlined in its first programme documents, or turn toward the petty-bourgeois reformism to which orthodox Proudhonists and liberal trade unionists were dragging it. For that decisive battle Marx, who could not go to the congress himself, thoroughly briefed the General Council's delegation. Without going into a detailed explanation of the concrete features of the new society that was to take the place of capitalism, he concentrated attention on the objective character of this process, which excluded voluntarism, and stressed the significance of the economic preconditions of socialism, its material and technical basis, maturing within the capitalist mode of production.

The draft resolution on the consequences of the application of machinery under capitalism, prepared by Marx for the congress, said directly that "the development of machine industry creates the material conditions necessary for replacement of the system of wage

labour by a truly social system of production."[1] Recognition of the historically progressive character of capitalist production as a stage in the development of the productive forces creating the material basis for socialist society meant to reject petty-bourgeois socialist utopias.

At the congress the opponents of collective ownership directed their main blow at the demand for the nationalisation of arable land. The *rapporteur* was De Paepe who led the group of Belgian collectivists; relying on advice received from Marx, he, first of all, substantiated the need to transfer the land to collective ownership by economic arguments and stressed the advantages of introducing large-scale farming and the use of machines and application of scientific amelioration. Small plots, he said, could not withstand the competition of big farms and were doomed to ruin; the private property of petty landowners was illusory.

The resolution, adopted by 30 votes to four, with 15 abstentions, proclaimed the need to transfer all land (including arable) with its minerals, woods and forests, waters, etc., to collective ownership in the person of the state.

The significance of this resolution was very great. For the first time in history a forum of representatives of mass workmen's organisations had expressed itself in favour of socialism. That bore witness to the international proletariat's passage to a higher level of social consciousness, and marked an important stage in uniting socialism with the mass working-class movement.

A major event in the history of the international proletariat was the affiliation of the Union of German Workers' Educational Societies (*Verband Deutscher Arbeiterbildungsvereine*), led by August Bebel, to the International at the Brussels Congress. The delegates of 93 educational societies meeting in congress at Nuremberg on 5 September 1868 had signified their agreement with the International's platform which was briefly formulated in the Union's programme submitted to the congress by 69 votes to 46. This decision meant a break between the Union's majority and the liberal bourgeoisie, and the majority's final passage to a class, proletarian position. The joining of the International was reinforced by the General Council's decision that the Union's board would be declared the executive committee of the International Association for Germany. Wilhelm Liebknecht in Leipzig and Wilhelm Eichhoff in Berlin were empowered to carry on propaganda for the International and to set up sections.

---

[1] Karl Marx, "Resolutionsentwurf über die Folgen der Anwendung von Maschinen durch die Kapitalisten, dem Brüsseler Kongreß vom Generalrat vorgeschlagen", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1968, Bd. 16, S. 315.

The socialist programme proclaimed at the Brussels Congress and confirmed by a special decision of the Basel Congress (1869), came from Marx and his closest associates in the General Council as regards its main formulations regarding nationalisation of the land and the most important means of production and transport. The programme still had to be worked out in detail and brought to the attention of the mass of the International's members.

While recognition of socialism as the goal of the movement no longer raised doubts among members of the International, there was not yet clarity on the issue of socialist revolution. The Basel Congress of 1869 came right up against the question of the ways and means of realising it. The stumbling-block was disagreement on the character of the revolution and its driving forces, on the role of the state, and on the forms of organising the proletariat's forces. The debate at the congress clearly indicated that a clash was imminent between the anarchists and supporters of federalism and the proletarian revolutionaries, who came forward as centralist democrats. The delegates of the General Council spoke straight out at the congress about the transforming role of the proletarian state, which posed the aim of establishing a just social system. Echoes of Marx's speeches in the General Council sounded in their words. The Marxist core of the International openly clashed for the first time at this congress with a new ideological opponent, the small group of delegates led by M. A. Bakunin.

The Brussels and Basel congresses, in registering a definite turn in understanding of the movement's aims—the turn toward socialism—reflected the gradual overcoming of sectarian, utopian, and petty-bourgeois socialist ideas by the separate national sections of the organised working-class movement. In France at that time left Proudhonists, who recognised the need for collective ownership, strikes, trade unions, and political struggle, had acquired decisive influence. In Germany the opposition elements within the General Association of German Workers were gradually uniting on the International's platform. In Switzerland the influence of bourgeois democrats and "orthodox" Proudhonists was overcome comparatively quickly.

At the end of the sixties there was a clearer moulding of ideologies—trade unionist and anarchist—alien to Marxism. The mass movement remained receptive to the influence of ideas in essence petty-bourgeois or bourgeois, primarily because of the heterogeneous social composition of its members, and of differences in the situation of the proletariat's various sections.

Marx waged a struggle against reformism, toward which the English trade union movement tended more and more, both on the theoretical plane, exposing the unscientific, distorted character of

vulgar political economy, and on the political plane, counterposing the basic principles of the proletariat's revolutionary tactics to the reformist practice of the English members of the General Council.

From the very start Marx saw one of the International's central tasks as revolutionising the British working class. The whole line of his conduct on the English question in the General Council turned on this objective, viz. to consolidate the proletarian core, to eliminate bourgeois liberal and bourgeois radical influences, to draw the local organisations of the trade unions into the International as a counterweight to their reformist leaders, and to educate them in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

Having observed the development of the British working-class movement for twenty years, Marx had no illusions by 1864 about the ideological level of Odger and Cremer, who represented the trade unions on the General Council. But he welcomed their participation in the International at first, contributed to the strengthening of their position in the General Council, and nominated Cremer as general secretary. The experience of Marx's work side by side with reformist leaders in the General Council is very instructive as an example of Marxist tactics of struggle for the worker masses. It must be remembered that up to a certain time these "uncrowned kings of London" really did represent the English working class just as much, if not more, as the Paris Proundhonists represented the French working class. In addition, leaders like Odger and Cremer were still quite suitable at the beginning of the 1860s as leaders of the general democratic mass movement. It was no accident that a group of bourgeois radicals turned precisely to these leaders in January 1865, inviting them to take part in a campaign to extend the franchise; in fact, they played an active role in the fight for electoral reform and proved able to carry the broad masses with them.

Marx resolutely supported the participation of General Council members in the movement for electoral reform. He utilised this opportunity to revive Chartist slogans as a counterweight to moderate bourgeois demands for a lowering of voting qualifications. He also put forward the organisational plan for the Reform League founded in 1865 (individual membership, local branches, a broad campaign of mass meetings, etc.), outlined the principles for the participation of representatives of the working class in the League's leadership on a parity basis, and maintained uninterrupted contact for two years with the worker leaders of the movement.

The League gave an impetus to the mass movement in all corners of the country and held thousands of meetings in the capital and other big towns. As a result, the first bill was turned down, there was a change of government, Parliament was dissolved, and new elections were held. It was a useful experience of political struggle

for the British workers. But the Reform League did not justify the hopes of Marx's supporters, who saw it as a stage on the road to revival of a Chartist-type workers' political party in Great Britain. Neither did it yield the results expected of it by the hundreds of thousands who took part in the meetings for a universal franchise. The reformist members of the League's leadership, frightened by the movement's scale, came to an understanding with the bourgeoisie, and abandoned the demand for universal suffrage at the most critical moment, in the spring of 1867. The Reform Act of 1867 extended the franchise only to part of the working class (tenants paying at least £ 10 a year rent).

We must draw attention to the moment at which this compromise electoral reform was carried out. The winter of 1866-1867, a winter of economic crisis, had finished; unemployment had grown; in Ireland the national emancipation struggle which was led by the Fenians' revolutionary-democratic society had become active, and popular meetings raged in London and the provinces. The attempt of the local authorities in London to ban the big meeting to be held in Hyde Park on 6 May 1867 evoked such a storm in the capital that the government was forced to compromise. "If the government was not afraid at the last meeting and used force, today it was. More than 200,000 men were waiting in the provinces for a signal to descend on London, armed to help the *reformers*", the corresponding secretary of the General Council for France, Eugène Dupont, wrote from London on 11 May 1967.[1]

In such a situation the Reform Act, hastily passed through both houses of Parliament by the Conservative's leader Disraeli, was a safety valve preventing an explosion. At the same time the Fenians were suppressed, while the Catholic elements in Ireland, who had inclined to refrain from revolutionary struggle, received a sop in disestablishment of the Church of Ireland (the Anglican Church in Ireland). In the revolutionary situation that was building up the ruling circles of Great Britain, its "top people", showed that they could still "live in the old way". Without the pressure from below, however, and without the drive of the masses, there would not have been even the partial reform of 1867.

The effect of this reform on the subsequent evolution of the British working-class movement was very considerable. It laid the basis for the official existence of the labour aristocracy as a category of voters and a stratum of liberal labour politicians. The better-off upper layer of the working class, which in fact included a considerable

[1] *Procès de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs. Première et deuxième commissions du bureau de Paris*, Paris, dans les locaux de l'association, Juin 1870, p. 106.

part of the trade union leaders as well, having obtained political rights, more or less openly isolated themselves from the masses of the workers. The already existing gap between the reformist leaders and the local organisations of the trade unions, which were close to the strata of unorganised workers, was widened. On the international plane, however, the British working class still represented not only a united section of the European proletariat but also, on the whole, a privileged one; privileged by virtue of its higher degree of organisation and greater weight in the political life of its own country; and privileged because of the supremacy of British industry in the world market, which provided the British worker the highest wages at the time, for the shortest working day. Such conditions often gave rise to a sense of exclusiveness, a selfish disdain for their class brothers in other countries, and a dereliction of the principles of proletarian internationalism (which showed, in particular, in a hostile attitude to the Irish).

Like reformism, anarchism in itself was not something new in the ideological affairs of the International. But if lack of understanding of the essence and role of the state remained an obstacle to Proudhonists' passage to the position of scientific communism, many of the dogmas peculiar to Proudhonists (rejection of economic and political struggle, nihilism on the national question, and so on) had already been quite quickly overcome and rejected at the International's first congresses. In the course of getting rid of Proudhonism, however, certain new views arose and spread. Many members of the International Association saw socialisation of the means of production as their transfer either to individual groups of workers (through co-operatives) or to urban and rural communes. This idea was combined with the old Proudhonist demand for the autonomy of communes and free federation and with a well-founded hostility to the bourgeois (and in many cases still the aristocratic-bourgeois) state and class law. The negative attitude to any form of political organisation that arose on that basis was used in its extreme expression by Bakunin, who developed an anarchist platform frankly opposed to scientific communism.

M. A. Bakunin became famous in revolutionary circles through his involvement in many uprisings. In the 1850s and 1860s, while an emigre, he maintained contacts with various groups of the revolutionary-democratic movement. At that time, and especially during his stay in Italy (1865-1867), he finally formulated his conception of revolutionary anarchism. Bakuninism, by expressing the frames of mind of the despairing masses of the people (peasants, urban petty bourgeois and artisans), rightless, and impoverished by the development of large-scale industry, had a dual and contradictory character. While sharply criticising all oppression and lack of legal rights and

calling for world revolution, destruction of all the institutions of the old society, and the establishment of socialism, Bakunin, at the same time, preached extreme individualism, seeing the root of all evil in the state, which was considered an absolute bane. From that stemmed a negative attitude to political struggle, the setting up of political parties, and any kind of "authority". Bakuninism, pleading the need for a revolutionary smashing of the exploiter superstructure, carried this demand to absurdity, to "universal destruction". In proclaiming anarchy, it denied the need for a dictatorship of the proletariat and national ownership of the instruments and means of production.

A voluntarist attitude to tactics did no less damage to the working-class movement, and so did the conviction that the social revolution or, in Bakunin's phrase, "social liquidation", could be begun at any moment, that only a push had to be given to the masses' movement. Preparation for the revolution, and also leadership of the masses during it, should be exercised, in Bakunin's view, by a secret (from the masses themselves), close-knit, narrow organisation of revolutionaries, subordinated to the strictest discipline. Bakunin himself compared this secret organisation with the Jesuit Order.

Bakunin enlisted his first supporters among members of the radical intelligentsia, who were more and more disappointed with Mazzini's reformist ideology. In 1864 he learned from Marx of the founding and goals of the International and formally joined it, but did not take part in the work of the Association until his transfer to Switzerland in 1868. His efforts at that time had been directed to rallying the extreme left wing of bourgeois democrats, which was linked with his plans to build his own organisation of revolutionaries. Only after an unsuccessful attempt to give a radical character to the bourgeois pacifist League of Peace and Freedom did Bakunin and a group of his supporters actively involve themselves in the work of the International Association's Romance Federation. Right from the start, however, he regarded the International's already formed organisation simply as a field for his activity and for implanting his own ideas and methods of struggle into the working-class movement.

With that aim Bakunin formed the so-called International Alliance of Socialist Democracy from a group of his friends. Its composition was extremely motley; it was joined by anarchists, ideological supporters of Bakunin, and bourgeois democrats, and quite chance people. Mainly they were members of the radical intelligentsia. They were also drawn to the International Alliance by a feeling of revolutionary impatience and lack of comprehension of the objectives of a mass organisation, and the old traditions of the conspiratorial societies of the period before 1848.

In addition to this open International Alliance, which adopted

a programme that combined extremist demands with the old proposals of utopian socialism ("equalising of classes" etc.),[1] Bakunin founded a secret Alliance; until the spring of 1872 only a narrow circle of his supporters knew about it. The open Alliance was constituted as an independent international organisation and laid claim to the role of "theoretical centre" of the International Working Men's Association. It was that circumstance which was the reason for the General Council's refusal to accept it into the International.[2] Only after the International Alliance was declared dissolved was its Geneva section, which bore the same name—Alliance of Socialist Democracy—accepted into the International Association.

In the succeeding years this section was converted into the Bakuninists' organisational and ideological centre. In 1869-1870 Bakunin and his supporters set up a number of small sections and groups of the secret Alliance in Spain, Italy, the South of France, and Switzerland on the basis of their programme, which they passed off as the International's programme. In Switzerland Bakuninism was mainly spread in the High Jura among the petty artisans of the watch and clock industry.

Basing themselves on the Jura sections, Bakunin and his supporters tried to seize control of the Romance Federation at the Chaux-de-Fonds Congress (1870). The General Council supported the Federation's former leadership, suggesting to the Bakunin sections that they limit themselves to forming their own federation. Though acquiring an organisational form, the Bakuninists still lacked a mass basis; they mainly represented a group of radical intellectuals and skilled Swiss workers of the artisan type.

The danger of Bakuninism to the working-class movement was clear to Marx and Engels from the moment of its birth. The struggle against it, however, developed in its most acute form later, when it had acquired a relatively broad social base.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE NATIONAL SECTIONS OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

The results of the International's activity began to be felt by the end of the 1860s. By mobilising workers for joint class actions and educating them in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the International at the same time helped consolidate the working class within the different countries.

---

[1] For the Programme and Rules of the Alliance and Marx's comments, see *The General Council of the First International. 1868-1870. Minutes*, pp. 379-83.

[2] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "Fictitious Splits in the International", *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2. pp. 250-54.

By considering the problems in those years of the working class's organisation and the formation of a proletarian party, Marx and Engels did not define in advance the road by which the process should be realised. In calling on members of the International Working Men's Association to unite the isolated workers' societies and unions on a national scale, Marx took as his starting point the possibility of transforming the growing network of local branches into a truly proletarian party.[1] He saw another path as well. As is clear from the Instructions for the delegates to the Geneva Congress, their author considered that trade unions should be transformed into organising centres of the proletariat's economic and political struggle.[2] The practical experience of the German working-class movement and the progressive role that the League of German Workers' Associations played in it had shown that even such an unspecifically class organisation as an educational society could yield significant results in the appropriate conditions, above all with political separation from the bourgeoisie. The possibility of employing mass democratic organisations set up with broad worker participation to achieve a definite political goal of some sort (like the Reform League in England) was also not ruled out. But the concluding step in all circumstances should be the transformation of the workers' historically established mass organisations into an independent political party of the proletariat with a programme based on the principles of scientific socialism.

A trend toward consolidation of the proletariat on a national scale was characteristic of this period when, as Lenin put it, "independent *proletarian* parties came into being".[3] It got its fullest expression in Germany when the Social-Democratic Workers' Party was founded at the congress in Eisenach on 7-9 August 1869. It was joined by German Workers' Educational Societies led by August Bebel, the International's sections in Germany, opposition elements from the General Association of German Workers breaking with the Lassallean leadership, representatives of trade unions, and workers who had previously belonged to the Saxon People's Party. The Eisenach

[1] The Provisional Rules called on members of the International to "use their utmost efforts to combine the disconnected working men's societies of their respective countries into national bodies, represented by central national organs", and stressed that such centralisation, being a necessary condition of "the success of the working men's movement in each country", would facilitate the task of co-ordinating it internationally. See Karl Marx, "General Rules of the International Working Men's Association", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 21.

[2] See Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council", Ibid., pp. 82-83.

[3] V. I. Lenin, "Historical Destiny of the Doctrine of Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 583.

programme was based on the principles of the International, i.e. its basis was Marxist. The rise of the Social Democratic Labour Party in Germany was a great victory for the ideas of scientific communism. It showed that Marxism's revolutionary teaching was becoming the general programme on which the best representatives of the international proletariat, having overcome sectarian and reformist illusions, were ultimately uniting. The Eisenach Congress confirmed the full fitness of the programme of the International Working Men's Association put forward by Marx as the basis for rallying the proletariat within national boundaries.

In France the formation of a party was held up primarily by the workers' theoretical unpreparedness.[1] In spite of the constant attention paid to this matter by Marx and Engels, and by their closest associates (Lafargue, Dupont, and others), the ideas of Marxism, and in particular the principles of historical materialism, were spread with difficulty among French workers. The formation of a proletarian party was complicated there, in addition, by the underestimation typical of Proudhonists of all forms of organisation of the working class (political and economic), and equally by the sectarian, conspiratorial habits and practice of the Blanquists.

Nevertheless, joint decision of practical tasks in struggle against the Bonapartist Empire and defence of working men's direct interests promoted a coming together of representatives of Proudhonism and Blanquism, the two main trends in the French workers' movement. The objective course of events led them to found a militant union to achieve an immediate aim, i.e. overthrow of the common enemy, the Empire.

The election programme of a group of Paris workers, issued in the spring of 1869 in connection with the elections for the Legislative Corps, can be considered a first step on this road. The leaders of the International's Paris sections (in particular Louis-Eugène Varlin) took part in compiling the programme together with well-known petty-bourgeois socialists and anti-Bonapartist left Republicans. A document adopted in the conditions of the Second Empire could not directly and openly demand the proclamation of a republic, but its character left no doubt about the anti-Bonapartist moods of its authors. The introductory part posed the objective of strengthening the democratic and socialist party by agreement among the various socialist groups to draft a common programme. The demands put forward in the programme included abolition of the standing army, separation of the Church from the State, the election and replaceability of officials and their responsibility to the voters, freedom

[1] Engels wrote in June 1872 that "the theoretical standpoint of the German workers is fifty years ahead" of that of the workers in Latin countries. (Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 323.)

of association, meeting, and the press, the cancellation of indirect taxes, nationalisation of the banks, railways, communications, and mines, self-government of municipalities, etc. At its meeting of 4 May 1869 the General Council evaluated the Paris socialists' programme as "based upon the platform of principles of the Association".[1]

A further step toward organisational unity of the Paris proletariat was the formation of the Federal Chamber of Workers' Societies on 19 November 1869 as the leading body of the Paris Federation of Trade Unions. Since the International was in a semi-legal position in France, workers' societies adopting its platform and sending delegates to its congresses usually did not mention that in their rules (except the Bookbinders' Society led by Varlin, and a few other unions). The Federal Chamber, having a legal status, took a united stand with the Paris federation of the International's sections on all political and social issues, and they sometimes held joint sessions. The premises on the Place de la Corderie du Temple rented by the Federal Chamber and the sections soon became the headquarters of the revolutionary and proletarian Paris after January 1870. In the last months of the Empire, during the siege of Paris, and in the days of the Commune the International's Federal Council, the Committee of 20 Arrondissements, and the Central Committee of the National Guard met there. The workers marched there in battle array, and the leaders of the workers' societies were on duty there round the clock during the armed uprising and political demonstrations.

Paul Lafargue, who was in constant contact with Blanqui in 1869-1870 with the knowledge and agreement of Marx, played a big role in the formation of the Paris Federation of the International, which was joined by certain sections founded by Blanqui. Then, too, Lafargue succeeded in publishing a new edition of the International's General Rules in Paris, which was purged of the previously tolerated distortions (in a Proudhonist spirit) of the translation.

In addition to consolidating the workers of the French capital the leaders of the International in France succeeded in forming a quite solid anti-Bonapartist block of the proletariat and left Republicans on the basis of the weekly *La Marseillaise*, which began to appear in January 1870. This paper, with a 100,000 circulation, regularly printed the International's statements. The editorial board included a member of the International and future Communard, the Blanquist Louis-Simon Dereure. Leading socialist publicists like Jules Valles, the Proudhonist Jean-Baptiste Millière, and the Blanquist Pascal Grousset, regularly contributed to it. Varlin,

[1] *The General Council of the First International. 1868-1870. Minutes*, p. 95.

one of the initiators of its publication, wrote of its class and revolutionary mission on 25 December 1869:

"The founders propose not only to make propaganda but also to rally the whole European socialist party, to establish permanent relations through the journal with all groups; to prepare, in short, for the European social revolution.... In our meetings", he wrote further, "we have been nearly unanimous in recognising that we were not ready for the revolution; that it needed another year, perhaps two, of active propaganda by the journal, public and private meetings, and the organisation of workers' societies to become masters of the situation and to be sure that the revolution would not slip away from us to the profit of non-socialist republicans."[1]

The importance of this realistic appraisal of the Paris workers' possibilities was shown by the events that took place on 12 January 1870 in connection with the funeral of the progressive journalist Victor Noir, killed by Pierre Bonaparte, a relative of Napoleon III. Only thanks to the firmness of certain worker leaders was the clash avoided that the government tried to provoke between the police and the huge anti-Bonapartist demonstration of the Paris proletariat and petty bourgeoisie (around 200,000 persons). At the same time, allowing for the Bonapartist regime's internal crisis and the gradual consolidation of the revolutionary forces, the Paris proletariat's leaders fixed their eyes hopefully on the future, considering that in a year or two they would manage to build an independent workers' party able to lead the masses in the approaching revolution.

In the situation of general dissatisfaction with the Bonapartist regime the ruling circles responded to the growth of the organised working men's movement with brutal repression. The major political trials in July 1870—of the Paris members of the International and of Blanquists—dealt a crushing blow to the workers' organisations, which proved leaderless and demoralised in conditions of mounting revolutionary crisis. When the Empire fell, therefore, power fell into the hands not of the advanced representatives of French society but of the rightist bourgeois republicans, who oriented themselves on a quick peace with Prussia and restoration of the monarchy.

THE EUROPEAN POWERS' FOREIGN POLICY AND THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT

The troubled, difficult 1860s, which were marked by a constant threat of war and premonition of revolution, witnessed the first mass actions of the workers of Europe and America against militar-

[1] *Troisième procès de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs à Paris*, Armand le Chevalier, Paris, 1870, p. 35.

ism and the ruling circles' aggressive policy. These actions, which were taken under the banner of proletarian internationalism, prepared the international proletariat for the much more responsible struggle in 1871 to defend the first workers' state in history—the Paris Commune.

The working out of an independent class stand on issues of international policy presented immense difficulty even for the advanced proletarians, who did not then have the theoretical training or the special knowledge, or even the needed information, carefully hidden from them by diplomatic secrecy and the official press. That is why Marx, in the "Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association", paid special attention to the matter of international relations. He defined the fight against the ruling classes' reactionary foreign policy as a direct responsibility of the proletariat. The working class had the duty, he wrote, "to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective Governments"; and to be ready "to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power", and "when unable to prevent, to combine in simultaneous denunciations" of the great powers' diplomatic intrigues.[1] It was the task of working classes to turn the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, into the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations. The fight for such a foreign policy formed part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working class.[2]

The international situation in which the European workers had to orient themselves and act was by no means simple. In the mid-nineteenth century one of the main contradictions in international relations was Franco-German rivalry. The Bonapartist Empire's striving to assert its hegemony in Europe had run up against the vigorously developing process of the formation of a united German state, a process in which various trends were counterposed to each other; the stubborn struggle of the proletarians, and subsequently of democratic elements, for a revolutionary unifying of the country in a German democratic republic, begun by Marx and Engels in 1848, had not ceased. At the same time the Prussian liberal bourgeoisie's capitulation to Bismarck, in 1859, had strengthened the position of the supporters of unification in a monarchical system headed by Prussia.

The representatives of the various strata of the French bourgeoisie did not, of course, go into the essence of this internal struggle; they were prepared to block the rise of a strong state in Central Europe

[1] Karl Marx, "Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 18.

[2] Ibid.

by any means, whatever its political system. Politicians and publicists belonging to the anti-Bonapartist camp protested against Bismarck's course, justly seeing in it a danger of the consolidation of militarism in international affairs and a threat to the general peace in Europe. They did not imagine the prospect of a democratic Germany.

The rivalry of Prussia and Bonapartist France pushed them onto the road of war. At the same time the apprehensions that a "big" war would be fraught with a European revolution forced the ruling circles of both countries to lean toward "little" wars retaining a dynastic character. Fear of revolution and of the growing working-class movement was thus transformed into an important factor directly influencing the foreign policy of the European powers. Because of this specific feature of the international situation in the 1860s, the great theoreticians of the proletariat considered the outlook for revolution to depend to some extent on the possibility of military conflicts.

In trying to develop a united proletarian stand on issues of foreign policy, Marx as leader of the International combined great explanatory work with support for the workers' spontaneously arising actions. By directing proletarians' actions into the necessary channel and throwing light on them in the General Council's appeals and other statements, Marx brought out the historical meaning of these proletarian actions, whose real significance remained unclear to their direct participants. The General Council of the First International faced the need to take a definite stand in regard to a concrete conflict for the first time in connection with the Austro-Prussian War of 1866.

In the spring of 1866, when the Austro-Prussian conflict was still only maturing, a broad movement of the workers developed in South and West Germany for unification of the country by a revolutionary path. The workers' educational societies played a leading role in this movement. Bebel and Liebknecht made an agitational tour through Saxony and Thuringia, and held many meetings at which the need for joint action with Lassallean workers in the fight for a republic was discussed. At a mass public meeting in Leipzig on 8 May 1866 Bebel moved a resolution demanding the convening of a Pan-German constituent parliament on the basis of universal, secret suffrage. The resolution expressed the conviction that "the German people will only elect men who will reject any hereditary central power".[1] Lenin subsequently called it "revolutionary and republican in character".[2] In Leipzig the resolution was endorsed by

[1] *Die I. Internationale in Deutschland (1864-1872)*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1964, S. 119.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "Reformism in the Russian Social-Democratic Movement", *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 237.

a meeting attended by more than 5,000 persons. Similar meetings were held in other cities.

On 15 May 1866 the Central Committee of the International's German sections headed by J. P. Becker, which was in Zurich, issued an appeal in the spirit of the Leipzig resolution. Appraising the threatening war as fratricidal and profiting only the enemies of the German people, the Committee called for general arming of the people to defend a united and indivisible fatherland, for the setting up of a Pan-German revolutionary committee, and the convening of an All-German assembly with legislative and executive functions on the basis of universal, direct, secret voting. The Committee advised the German sections of the International Working Men's Association to carry out this resolution, and the various workers' societies to begin similar preparations.[1]

Thus the leaders of German workers who had already taken a stand on scientific communism called on the workers to utilise the situation being created to realise the unity of Germany in a revolutionary way. This stand of the German members of the International fully corresponded to the views and aspirations of Marx and Engels. It would have been premature then, however, to propose this action programme to the whole International. It would not have been accepted by the rank-and-file members of the International in many countries or by a majority of the General Council.

We can see that, in particular, from the content of the anti-war appeals that were exchanged by the students and young workers of various countries in connection with the sharpening of relations between Prussia and Austria and the war preparations of both those countries.[2]

Although these appeals expressed alarm for the fate of the people, they contained no analysis of any kind of the foreign policy situation. Their authors did not even try to define the character of the maturing conflict and the tasks of the workers of the different countries in the existing circumstances.

On 19 June 1866 a discussion on the war began in the General Council on a report by Eccarius. The debate showed that English workers' long-standing sympathy with the unity movement in Italy was still alive among them, and that, given a military alliance between Bismarck and Italy, objectively meant support for Prussia. The French members of the Council took a contrary stand; while criticising Prussian militarism, they opposed the creation of a centralised German state, and made propaganda for Proudhonist federalism, i.e. in reality supported the separatist tendencies of the South German

[1] Die I. Internationale..., S. 120-21.

[2] *The General Council of the First International, 1864-1866. Minutes*, pp. 369-71.

states and Saxony desired by the French bourgeoisie. Some French members of the General Council, who were under Proudhon's influence, argued that all nations were "antiquated prejudices", and that working men and socialists had no business with national emancipation movements, when the social revolution was already knocking on the door.[1] Marx criticised this sectarian position, ironically stressing that those who defended it "by the negation of nationalities ... appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption by the model French nation".[2]

In defining the position of the International's members to the Austro-Prussian War, it was necessary to take into account the fact that the concrete objectives facing the workers of each country were not identical. The difficulty was to work out a common decision that would inculcate a feeling of proletarian internationalism in the workers of the different countries and preclude any possibility of the decision's being interpreted in a chauvinistic spirit.

Describing this main difficulty to Engels Marx stressed that it is necessary "to prevent in particular every demonstration that would involve our Association in a one-sided course".[3] On July 17 he was one of the main speakers in the discussion. He explained to the leaders of the International the proletariat's interest in a progressive and democratic completion of national unity in both Germany and Italy. The resolution adopted at the meeting (later reproduced in the International's English and French press) read: "that the Central Council of the International Working Men's Association consider the present conflict on the Continent to be one between Governments and advise working men to be neutral, and to associate themselves with a view to acquire strength by unity and to use the strength so acquired in working out their social and political emancipation".[4]

The military danger arising in the spring of 1867 in connection with the conflict between Bismarck and Napoleon III in regard to Luxembourg gave rise to a new, unusually broad wave of anti-war actions by European workers, in particular in France and Germany. In April Berlin engineering workers appealed to their French opposite numbers, calling on them to fight jointly for freedom against the common enemy of the working class, and expressed their devotion to peace. On April 28th the committee of the Paris section of the International published its reply, in which it said: "We workers will never

[1] *La Rive gauche*, 1 July 1866.

[2] Karl Marx, "Letter to Engels, 20 June 1866", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 168.

[3] Ibid.

[4] *The General Council of the First International. 1864-1866. Minutes*, p. 213.

forget that the *work* we are doing to unite all can only be developed by peace and liberty...

"We want peace and liberty...

"Brothers in Berlin! Brothers in Germany!

"In the name of the general solidarity called for by the International Association, we exchange peaceful greetings with you that will cement afresh the indissoluble alliance of working men!"[1]

On May 7th an appeal was sent to German workers from the working men of Lyons and surrounding towns. The General Council passed it to Marx for publication in Germany.

The section of the International in Cosne (Loire Department) wrote in an appeal "To Brothers in Germany": "Let us raise our voices on both sides of the Rhine: Down with arms! Long live labour and liberty!"[2] The section in Locle (Switzerland) said in its appeal "To the Working Men of Europe": "To call a war between Germany and France a national war is a trick. It cannot be repeated enough that any war between the European peoples is no longer a national war but a civil war".[3] The section in Lausanne and many others expressed themselves in a similar spirit.

Letters poured in to editors of various newspapers from sections of the International and from workers' groups, stating their solidarity with the protests against the war.

Commenting on the powerful, spontaneously arising protest movement against war, J. P. Becker wrote: "A surprising sign of the times is not simply the concurrence of the sentiments of these statements but also the simultaneity, without any presumable arrangement or imitation, with which they have been made public."[4] The activity of the masses created favourable soil for further strengthening of the position of proletarian internationalism in relation to wars, but petty-bourgeois illusions still prevented workers from understanding the issue fully.

In connection with the convening in Geneva in 1867 of the first congress of the bourgeois-pacifist League of Peace and Freedom Marx criticised attempts to treat the issue of war and peace in isolation from their social foundations: "Those who declined putting their shoulders to the wheel to bring about a transformation in the relations of labour and capital ignored the very conditions of universal peace."[5] Considering that the workers were not yet organised enough to have

---

[1] E. Fribourg, *L'Association Internationale des Travailleurs*, Le Chevalier, Paris, 1871, pp. 104-05.

[2] Translated from the German of the report in *Der Vorbote*, 1867, No. 6, S. 92, 93.

[3] Ibid., S. 94.

[4] Ibid.

[5] *The General Council of the First International, 1866-1868. Minutes*, p. 152.

a decisive influence on the course of events, and in particular to influence the League's tactics, Marx opposed official participation in the congress by a delegation from the International. At the same time, considering that its foundation reflected the strong anti-war moods of broad strata of the petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, he recommended members of the International to attend the congress in their personal capacity so as to put the position of the proletarian revolutionaries at it.

The corresponding secretary of the General Council for France, Eugène Dupont (the first Marxist to come from the ranks of the French working class) spoke at the League of Peace and Freedom's congress: "The most zealous partisan of lasting peace is unquestionably the working man; for it is he who is smashed by the cannon on the battlefield, it is he whose labour and midnight toil feed the war budget.... Do you believe, citizens, that you will attain it by the means proposed to you yesterday?... To establish lasting peace one must annul the laws that oppress labour, and all privileges, and make a single class of working men out of all citizens. In short, accept the social revolution and all its consequences."[1]

The vitality of petty-bourgeois illusions showed in the resolution of the International's Brussels Congress in 1868, which contained an unreal proposal to prevent the war by calling a general strike. In criticising this resolution Marx, as before, considered only a public protest of the workers against the war and exposure of its instigators to be feasible. The congress should have declared, he suggested, that "a war between France and Germany is a civil war, ruinous for both countries, and ruinous for all Europe".[2]

Such tactics were already being pursued by worker leaders. That is how Wilhelm Liebknecht acted, speaking in the German Reichstag against Prussian militarism, and the French members of the International, exposing Napoleon III's adventurist foreign policy.

The European working class gradually gained experience of the fight for peace. In the General Council's address to the National Labour Union of the United States, on 12 May 1869, Marx could write, not without justice: "Now at last the working classes are bestriding the scene of history no longer as servile retainers, but as independent actors, conscious of their own responsibility, and able to command peace where their would-be masters shout war."[3]

---

[1] James Guillaume, *L'Internationale. Documents et Souvenirs (1864-1878)*, Vol. 1, Société Nouvelle de Librairie et d'Edition, Paris, 1905, pp. 50-51.

[2] Karl Marx, "Letter to George Eccarius and Frederick Lessner in Brussels, 10 September 1868", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1973, Bd. 32, S. 558.

[3] Karl Marx, "Address to the National Labour Union of the United States", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 157.

When the Franco-Prussian War began, the International as a whole was quite strong and organised, and Marx deemed it possible to appeal to its sections with a definite action programme.

In the atmosphere of chauvinistic intoxication artificially fanned by the ruling circles of France and Germany, the advanced workers, members of the International, in both countries, raised their voices, in spite of persecution, in defence of peace. In the address "To the Workmen of All Nations" the Paris sections assured them of their fidelity to class solidarity: "Brothers of Germany! Our division would only result in the complete triumph of *despotism* on both sides of the Rhine."[1] Members of the International in the Parisian suburb of Neuilly-sur-Seine, adhering to the protest of the Paris sections "in the name of humanity, of democracy, and the true interests of France", declared: "The war, is it just?—No! The war, is it national?—No! It is merely dynastic."[2] In July 1870 workmen's meetings convened in Brunswick, Chemnitz, and Leipzig, by Social Democrats, and the Berlin branch of the International declared their fidelity to the international brotherhood of working men and their indignation against the dynastic character of the war.[3]

Marx welcomed these statements by French and German workmen in the "First Address of the General Council on the Franco-Prussian War", written by him and dated 23 July 1870, seeing in them confirmation of the great emancipatory mission of the working class, the creators of the new society.[4]

This Address, like all the documents coming from Marx's pen, contained much more than just tactical instructions in each case. The method of the class approach to war was demonstrated in it, a whole period of European international relations was summed up, and the effect of wars on the future fate of the working-class movement was appraised.

At the same time the Address was a generalisation of all the practical actions of the European workers against militarism and war. It was based on the International's six years' experience in this field and was therefore understood by the broad mass of the members in sections, who recognised their own thoughts and feelings in it, as it were. But in Marx's exposition these ideas were freed from the load of philistine illusions and bourgeois liberal verbiage. They were formulated in the language of proletarian internationalism.

---

[1] Quoted by Marx in the "First Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Franco-Prussian War". Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 191.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., pp. 192-93.

[4] Ibid., p. 193.

In putting forward as the central issue in the first stage of the war the inevitability and desirability of military defeat of the Bonapartist Empire, the Address supported the French members of the International in their fight against Napoleon III's regime and helped German Social Democrats to understand the complicated contradictions between the real interests of the German people and the aggressive, provocatory policy of Bismarckian Prussia.

Published as a leaflet in English, the Address was immediately reprinted by many London newspapers, and was widely circulated in England and America, and penetrated into Germany, Switzerland, and France in French and German translations.

Already on 21 July, in the vote on war credits in the North German Reichstag, the workers' deputies Liebknecht and Bebel filed a statement of their reasons for abstaining from voting. "The present war is a dynastic war", they wrote, ... "We *cannot grant* the financial resources demanded by the Reichstag for the conduct of the war, because this would be a vote of confidence in the Prussian government, which prepared the present war by its course of action in 1866.

"It is equally impossible for us to *refuse* the money demanded, for this might be taken as a justification of the vicious and criminal policy of Bonaparte."[1] Liebknecht and Bebel defined their stand as that of "opponents on principle of any dynastic war, Social Republicans, and members of the International Working Men's Association".[2] It opened a glorious page in the history of the German proletarian party, a page that the International's London Conference subsequently declared laconically in its special resolution: "The German working men have done their duty during the Franco-German war."[3] The line of the German members of the International, which combined struggle against the Second Empire in the first stage of the war with exposure of the Prussian dictatorship of the bayonet in Germany and the Bonapartist "stick and carrot" method characteristic of Bismarck, was subsequently developed in actions against the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine and for an honourable peace with the French people, and later in Bebel's bold speeches in defence of the Paris Commune in the Berlin Reichstag.

In a statement on 20 July 1870 the central organ of the Social Democratic Labour Party *Der Volksstaat* called editorially for "a proper judgement of the matter", writing: "The December Thro-

---

[1] *Der Volksstaat*, 23 July 1870. Cited from Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 300.

[2] Ibid.

[3] *The General Council of the First International. 1870-1871. Minutes*, p. 446.

ne is the cornerstone of reactionary Europe. If Bonaparte falls so will the main support of the modern classes—and sabre rule. If Bonaparte wins, then European democracy is defeated together with French democracy....

"*Our interests demand the destruction of Bonaparte.*

"Our interests are in harmony with the interests of the French people....

"First to settle accounts with the French Empire[1], then with the German."[2]

The statement closed with the slogan: "Proletarians of all countries, unite!"

The advanced German workers' estimate of the war as anti-Bonapartist reflected the objective content of Napoleon III's foreign policy directed against the unity of Germany. Unlike German nationalists, however, the German and international proletariat, republican minded, were not interested in the victory of monarchist Prussia. Therefore the slogan of an anti-Bonapartist war was only possible for revolutionary workers in combination with the boldest, most merciless exposure of Bismarck's regime.

Proletarian revolutionaries, who expected a quick fall of the Empire in France, understood that that event would alter the character of the war in a radical way. Taking that into account, Marx wrote in the General Council's First Address: "If the German working class allow the present war to lose its strictly defensive character and to degenerate into a war against the French people, victory or defeat will prove alike disastrous."[3]

Elimination of Bonapartism from the historical scene would give the war an expansionist character as regards Germany. In these new circumstances the German workers had to fight for the cessation of hostilities and to get the speediest conclusion of an honourable peace with the French people, without annexations and reparations.

Marx set these new objectives out in detail in the Second Address of the General Council, in which he outlined an action programme for the international proletariat in connection with the changing character of the war in its second stage.

The Address was issued on 9 September 1870, already after the French Army's defeat at Sedan and the revolution of September 4th in Paris that overthrew Bonaparte's Empire and proclaimed France a republic.

---

[1] The reference is to the Second Empire, instituted by the coup d'état of December 1852.

[2] *Der Volksstaat*, 20 July 1870.

[3] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 192.

On September 5th the committee of the Social-Democratic Labour Party had met in Brunswick and issued a manifesto in which, guided by a letter received from Marx and Engels, they called on German workers to oppose the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine and to strive by demonstrations and public meetings for an "honourable peace" with the French Republic.[1] Immediately after publication of the manifesto all five members of the committee were arrested, accused of treason, put in irons, and sent to the fortress of Loetzen on Prussia's eastern frontier. Members of the Party's auditing commission and many leaders of local organisations were also arrested.

In spite of the crushing repression, the Party did not give up the fight. A temporary Central Committee was set up in Drezden. The newspaper *Der Volksstaat* came out with the headlines "No Annexations!" and "A Fair Peace with the French Republic!", exposed the brutality of the Prussian Army in the occupied territories, and openly expressed sympathy with the French people. Big protest meetings against Prussia's policy were held in different towns in Germany in spite of the bans.

On November 24th Liebknecht and Bebel, against the furious protest of the Junkers, moved a resolution to refuse funds for further conduct of the war, and demanding the speediest conclusion of a just peace without annexations with the French Republic.

The German bourgeois papers tried to hide these bold speeches of the worker deputies from the public but, reproduced as leaflets by the Social-Democratic Labour Party, they were circulated widely in Germany and reprinted in the English and Continental press. On December 19th Liebknecht and Bebel were arrested, in violation of their Parliamentary immunity, on the basis of documents discovered as the result of the case against the Party's Brunswick committee; they were held in custody accused of treason, until 28 March 1871.

The Second Address of the International's General Council, which oriented French workers toward using the republican regime to consolidate their forces, also outlined the actions that English workmen should take in the new stage of the Franco-Prussian War, namely "wholesome pressure from without" on the government to recognise the French Republic.[2]

The English workers' movement for recognition of the French Republic by the British Government was one of the mass and vigo-

[1] Marx/Engels, "Brief an den Ausschuß der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei", *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1973, Bd. 17, p. 269.

[2] Karl Marx, "Second Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Franco-Prussian War", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 201.

rous campaigns conducted by the working class of England during the years of the International.[1] During it every possibility at the disposal of the British workers was used to the full: freedom of the press, speech, and assembly and meeting, including the right of deputations to approach members of the government directly. In London alone in September 1870 eighteen mass meetings were held. Similar meetings also took place in Birmingham, Newcastle, and Manchester. Members of the International actively encouraged spread and activation of the movement even where they were not its direct organisers. Marx took an active part in organisation of the campaign by his statements in the General Council. He also used his own personal links with workers and democratic figures in England. "I have set everything in motion here (on Monday several meetings were held) for the workers to force their Government to recognise the French Republic", he wrote to Engels on 10 September 1870.[2]

The first stage in the campaign culminated in the reception of a big delegation by Gladstone, the Prime Minister, on 28 September 1870. The hundred members of the delegation included seven members of the General Council, one of whom was the Russian revolutionary Herman Lopatin. Gladstone's refusal to meet the worker delegation's demand was veiled in diplomatic excuses. While considering it impossible to recognise a government that called itself "Provisional", Gladstone pleaded the necessity to await its legalisation by regular election. It was clear to everyone that the occupation of a considerable part of French territory and the siege of Paris had made this condition unrealisable to the time, but the English leaders of the movement were satisfied by the excuse.

A second wave of actions, which began in January 1871, was also not crowned with success. The reason was the absence of unity in the English working-class movement itself, a part of which had taken the stand of the bourgeois Comtist-radicals who were demanding England's military intervention on the side of France. This unreal, adventurist demand repelled many workers, who left the movement. The actions of the English workers during the Franco-Prussian war, though they did not produce palpable positive results, had an educational significance.

The workers of Switzerland and Belgium, in turn, closely linked with the proletarians of both France and Germany, displayed very warm sympathy for their class brothers in the two countries en-

[1] For fuller details, see, for example: F. G. Ryabov, "Marx and Engels and the English Workers' Fight for Recognition of the Republic in France".—In: *From the History of Marxism and the International Working-Class Movement* (in Russian).

[2] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 33, S. 60.

gulfed by war. In numerous appeals and addresses, and at mass meetings, they demanded stopping of the war and immediate peace, protested at the persecution of members of the International and socialists in the belligerent countries, and collected donations so as to help the families of those arrested and the war-wounded.[1]

THE PROLETARIAT AND THE EMANCIPATION STRUGGLE OF OPPRESSED PEOPLES

At the time of the founding of the International the Marxist system of views on the policy of the working class in relation to national emancipation movements had already been created.

The general theoretical foundation of ways to settle the national question corresponding to the interests of the working class and at the same time meeting the objective patterns of the historical process, had already been laid by the founders of scientific socialism in the 1840s when they were working out the principles of the materialist conception of history. It was then that they posed the future of nations, national contradictions, and national movements in connection with the objectives of the workers' struggle; Marx and Engels based themselves on the liberating principles of the proletariat's policy put forward by them, namely, a proletarian, class approach and proletarian internationalism. These two principles mutually supplement each other because they are aspects of the doctrine of the working class' world historical mission.

By making the socialist revolution the proletariat (the fathers of scientific socialism showed) put an end to the oppression of some nations by others but, in order to win, it must receive the support of downtrodden peoples struggling for national emancipation. The conclusion could be reached only during the moulding of socialism as a science. The Chartists of the pre-Marxian period expressed sympathy with downtrodden peoples noting that their exploitation and plundering profited only the ruling classes, but they did not take that proposition any further as a rule. Proudhonists ignored the national question. Bakunin put forward an idea in those years of "the brotherhood of nations", which, not being linked with the objectives of the workers' class struggle, was utopian, and in addition harmful, because it could be employed by reactionary political forces. Only Marx and Engels put solution of the problem on a scientific basis.

The attitude of the founders of scientific socialism to concrete national movements was a differentiated one. As spokesmen of the

[1] For the French proletariat's struggle during the Franco-Prussian war see Volume 2 of the present study.

working class they supported national movements that opposed counter-revolutionary forces. Movements that objectively aided reaction to stifle the European revolution, on the contrary, did not deserve the support of the revolutionary proletariat in any way.

At that time, in Europe, the issue of completing the creation of national states was on the agenda, above all unification of Germany and Italy. For the proletariat that meant, in particular, clearing medieval ruins from the field of their coming battle with the bourgeoisie. The proletariat therefore had an interest in unity being established in a revolutionary way "from below". By these considerations Marx and Engels were also guided when advising the workers to take one stand or another on conflicts between states.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the founders of Marxism substantially broadened the range of matters that they were studying in working out views on the national question. That was dictated by the course of historical development itself. Colonial empires had been established. Unrest had begun in India that later developed into a vast national uprising. A broad anti-feudal and anti-colonial movement had developed in China. The overseas conquests and consolidation of the colonial supremacy of European powers, in particular Great Britain, told on the European proletariat's position and political conduct. The interest of the theoreticians of the working class in the national question as regards colonies and semi-colonies correspondingly grew.

In the 1850s Marx introduced a number of highly fruitful ideas into this field. For the first time in socialist literature he expressed and substantiated the idea of a close interconnection between the European revolution and the emancipation movement in distant regions (in particular, in China).[1] Furthermore he drew attention to the definite connection between the antifeudal movement in China and the British invasion; that invasion, he pointed out, had ruined manufactures, worsened the situation of the population, and caused a social explosion.[2]

In a series of articles devoted to Indian problems (1853) the disruptive influence of the conquest of the Indian village commune was disclosed and the tragedy of a great people demonstrated. The working men both of India and of England, Marx considered, had to make use of the results of the social changes caused by the expansion of capital. He had already shown that this country, conquered by the British, would be able to take its fate into its own hands even before victory of the proletarian revolution in Britain. "The Indians

[1] Karl Marx, "Revolution in China and in Europe", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, pp. 93-94.
[2] Ibid., p. 95.

will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British bourgeoisie, till in Great Britain itself the now ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindoos themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether."[1]

The idea of a possible successful outcome of the struggle of the peoples of colonies for political emancipation even before victory of the proletarian revolution in the metropolis was developed further in the works of Marx and Engels on the basis of their generalisation of the experience of the emancipation movement in Ireland at the end of the 1860s. They established the possibility in principle of the victorious fight of a colonial people for independence becoming a most important preliminary condition of a triumphant socialist revolution in the oppressing country.

The movement of the colonial peoples of the East was then sporadic and did not yet have a marked effect on the fate of the world. The national movements in Europe, however, for example in Ireland or in Poland, were taking place in direct proximity to the vital centres of the capitalist system. Marx and Engels, being political realists and direct participants in revolutionary events, therefore paid their main attention to European affairs when defining the proletariat's tactics on the national question. At the same time they were fully aware of the role that the East would have to play in future revolutions.

Marx and Engels exposed the inhumanity of the colonisers and their selfish class interests. They deeply sympathised with the sufferings of the Indian peoples and others, who were being pushed by the conquerors into the capitalist Golgotha. They knew that the chapters of the history of Eastern peoples concerned with the development of capitalism would, like the corresponding chapters of the history of the peoples of Europe, be marked by the impress of hunger and suffering. The proletariat, however, they considered, had to act on the basis of the situation created and not mourn over it, fully allowing for the changes associated with the expansion of capitalism. They did not idealise the emancipation movements of the downtrodden peoples of the East but saw their specific character: their spontaneity, unorganised nature, religious character, and monarchist illusions.

Marx was far from identifying the development of capitalism and the building up of its world system as the creation of a homogeneous, uniform capitalist sphere that would develop by iron logic to its end. The forces of protest and indignation, i.e. the revolutionary

[1]Karl Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 221.

forces, would be able to break the power of capital, in Marx's idea, even before it had converted all the working people of the world into proletarians. The anti-capitalist potential brought into being by world capitalist development overtakes the latter; it would be transformed into a mighty revolutionary factor able to bring about the socialist revolution even before capitalism had become a uniform world system. That posing of the matter posited, consequently, that after the victory of proletarian revolutions there would simultaneously exist both socialist and pre-socialist societies. Marx called the problem of the interrelations of these groups of society the "difficult question".[1] The full answer to it was given by Lenin in developing the theory of imperialism and the doctrine of proletarian revolution.

A partial expression of the general idea set out above was the view that it was possible to by-pass or interrupt the capitalist development of the backward country or countries substantiated by Marx in relation to Russia, but applying to the whole "backward world". The conditions necessary for realising this idea could arise, from Marx's point of view, as a result of a socialist revolution carried through by the proletariat of capitalist countries and a democratic emancipation revolution by the people of backward countries. Years would pass and this idea of Marx's would be consigned to oblivion by the theoreticians of the colonial question in the Second International. The opportunist Hubert Van Col, moreover, declared at an international socialist congress that history would refute it. Only Lenin and the Communist International returned to this idea and developed it in the doctrine of a non-capitalist road of development for economically backward countries.

Marx and Engels were able to develop the national question profoundly for the simple reason that they were consistent internationalists. Behind national political conflicts, the striving of peoples for national unification, the policy of governments on the national question, and wars between national states, and between these states on the one hand and subjugated peoples on the other hand, they saw the struggle of classes (proletariat, bourgeoisie, the landed aristocracy, and other social strata).

Marx and Engels' initial idea of the socialist revolution as a condition for settling the national question, developed by taking the experience of the proletarian and national emancipation movement into account, has thus been enriched and has acquired new facets. In combination with the general appraisal of the outlook for the revolutionary process, it now looks as follows. The working class

[1] Karl Marx, "Letter to Frederick Engels in Manchester, 8 October 1858", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 104.

of advanced capitalist countries, in striving for the socialist revolution, can get support from downtrodden peoples fighting for national emancipation (including those among them who were victims of colonial expansion). Their struggle, being directed against the reactionary forces, furthers the proletarian onslaught; victory of the revolution in capitalist countries on the other hand creates favourable conditions for a general socialist transformation in which all peoples will be involved in one way or another.

Such were the ideas of Marx and Engels on the emancipation struggle of downtrodden peoples, ideas that were very closely linked with their conclusions on the main roads of the proletariat's struggle and that they counterposed both to nationalistic tendencies and to nihilism on the national question.

* * *

In the 1850s and 1860s the international working-class movement made a considerable step forward. The growth of class consciousness among the proletarian masses found expression in a strengthening everywhere of the strike struggle at the end of the 50s. In many countries there was marked consolidation of the working class' organisation at that time, and a broadening of the workers' striving for unity in the fight against capital on a local, national, and international scale. Although many proletarians were still under the influence of various utopian, petty-bourgeois socialist theories, these were continuously being overcome during the practical class struggle and increasingly broader circles of the advanced workers were being drawn to the ideas of scientific communism. At the end of the 1860s the international proletariat's organised movement was beginning to show itself to be an important force in the political affairs of the capitalistically developed countries of Europe and North America.

The most significant factor in the development of the international working-class movement at that time was the international consolidation of the proletariat, which had its clearest embodiment in its first international mass organisation, the International Working Men's Association.

The First International, which was a catalyst of the international rallying of the proletariat, had covered only half of its historical road in the period reviewed here, but it made considerable progress in that time. By 1870 sections of the International existed in more than ten countries. Organisationally they were still weak, many of them had to operate semi-legally, and sometimes completely underground. The sphere of influence of the International and its ideas, however, was immeasurably broader than the direct limits of its organisation as such; tens, and sometimes hundreds of thousands of working men

were involved in the mass campaigns led by it, although formally speaking, the number of members of some local branches was very small.

The significance of the International's activity in the 1860s was that it gave the advanced workers a common platform of socio-economic and political struggle in which the first steps on the road to organisation of the working class were tied to the final goal of the proletarian movement—complete emancipation of the proletariat. That platform, founded on the ideas of Marxism, used the idea of the world historical role of the proletariat and Marx's doctrine about its allies.

In exercising ideological and political leadership of the International, Marx and Engels gave the traditions of the working-class movement firm foundations of proletarian internationalism. They defined the stand of the proletariat on the emancipation struggle of downtrodden peoples, starting from a scientific substantiation of its international liberating mission.

The First International's experience equipped the international proletariat with organisational forms and standards of leadership that found further development in the practice of the international working-class movement. The programmatic and organisational principles put forward by the International Working Men's Association trained the working class in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and at the same time furthered consolidation of the proletariat within the borders of the different countries. In Germany that process reached its culmination in founding at Eisenach in 1869 of the first political party to unite the working class on the basis of Marxism. On the eve of the general European revolutionary crisis, the culmination of which was soon to be the first proletarian revolution—the Paris Commune—the working class of the other advanced countries, and primarily the French proletariat, were not yet equipped with theory and did not have an independent class political party. Just the same the international working class, in passing through the school of proletarian internationalism in the ranks of the International Working Men's Association, was able to march boldly forward to meet the historical trials ahead of it.

Chapter 10

THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE AROUND THE PROLETARIAT'S HISTORICAL ROLE

Right from its creation, and in the subsequent stages of its historical development, scientific socialism has been the centre of a fierce ideological and political struggle. This struggle has centred primarily on Marxism's key proposition about the revolutionary and emancipating mission of the proletariat, and scientific interpretation of the processes governing its rise and formation as the leading revolutionary social force. This theme occupied a major place in the work of bourgeois historians of various ideological and political trends, from conservatives to radicals, and still does. Spokesmen of the social-reformist trend have tried to give their own interpretation of the social processes unfolding in modern times. Ultra-left theoreticians, including anarchists, also entered this field of activity, and still operate in it.

Some historians looked upon the working class as an "unbridled" force, disrupting the natural course of the historical process. Others, alloted it the role of a passive mass in need of "enlightened" leadership. A third group endeavoured and are still trying to show that the working class is inevitably "integrated" into the capitalist system. A fourth group extolled the spontaneousness of proletarian movements, idealised their early forms, likened the proletariat to the lumpen-proletariat, and sometimes replaced the former by the latter.

Very often a distorted interpretation of the working class's socio-historical role in the initial phase of its formation and development was not only due to incorrect methodological considerations but was primarily caused by quite concrete political ones. An all-round scientific criticism of the different variants of a speculative interpretation of the history of the working class and its movement (its initial stages included), and an exposure of its unsoundness and class bias are still of vital concern from both the angle of research and the standpoint of the ideological struggle.

* * *

There was a distorted, falsified treatment of the working class's role in the socio-historical process in the works of reactionary ideologists right from the first third of the nineteenth century, i.e., from the time the proletariat began to make itself felt as a growing and increasingly independent social force. The main *leitmotif* was fear of the new, incomprehensible factor that threatened to overturn the "established" order in which a tiny minority of the high born or the rich (the one or the other, or both together) disposed of the fate of the majority of the destitute labouring masses with impunity. On that basis there arose a kind of unity of apologists for both feudal and bourgeois relations. Both the Viscomte de Chateaubriand, who was famous as an obscurantist even among the ideologists of aristocracy, and St. Marc Girardin, editor of the Parisian *Journal des Débats*, organ of the big bourgeoisie, abused, with amazing unanimity, the French workmen who had risen against capitalist exploitation as "new barbarians" who threatened society's existence.[1]

Denial of the revolutionary, creative potentialities of the proletariat and a representation of it exclusively as a destructive force incapable of a positive historical creative effect, and therefore a tool of "demagogues", was also common among conservative German economists, historians, and sociologists. A leading spokesman of vulgar political economy, Rodbertus-Jagetzow (Engels called him "the real founder of specifically Prussian socialism"[2]) frightened his countrymen (in an article "The Demands of the Working Classes", published in 1837) that meeting the demands of the "working classes" would be the "grave of modern culture".[3] Following the French Conservatives he appraised the proletariat's growing revolutionary movement as a new invasion of the "Vandals".

This anti-proletarian idea stood out especially clearly in the opinion of Lorenz von Stein. An extreme reactionary, and one of the forerunners of modern anti-communism, he stated, with no foundation, that the proletariat's emancipation struggle was allegedly "calling in question the finest and most precious check against the German values achieved by mankind through heavy toil", the foundations of civilisation, which the proletariat "rejected with equal condemnation and hatred".[4]

---

[1] Fernand Rude, *L'insurrection lyonnaise de novembre 1831. Le mouvement ouvrier à Lyon de 1827-1832*. Editions anthropos, Paris, 1969, pp. 663-65, 670-71.

[2] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, S. 177.

[3] C. Rodbertus-Jagetzow, *Zur Beleuchtung der socialen Frage*, Part 2 (Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, Berlin, 1885), S. 195.

[4] L. von Stein, *Der Sozialismus und Kommunismus des heutigen Frankreichs, Ein Beitrag zur Zeitgeschichte*, Verlag von Otto Wigand, Leipzig, 1848, S. 10-11.

Echoes of these trends are also heard in the bourgeois conservative literature of the twentieth century.

The mass people's movement, including the proletarian one, is depicted in the writings of historians of a conservative bias as the source of a pernicious development that was the cause of probably all modern civilisations' "woes" from the crisis of the parliamentary system to the corruption of "traditional" morals and culture. According to some spokesmen of this trend, mankind's progress—in conditions of developing revolutionary action by the masses, and as a result of it—was illusory because it promoted a breakdown of the "historical order" that undermined many former standards and the very idea of reason's normative function. Social development, at the source of which lay revolutions, by emancipating man from traditions and habits led (they said) to complete ideological and political disorientation together with general anarchy and destruction of spiritual values, and inevitably to extreme forms of Caesarism with all the tragic consequences stemming from them.[1]

According to that interpretation of historical development responsibility for all the upheavals that capitalist society has experienced during the past two centuries, including the reactionary overturns and dictatorial counter-revolutionary regimes from Bonapartism to fascism, rests on the masses of the people, and mainly on the proletariat.[2] They sometimes even depict Jean Jacques Rousseau as one of the ideological "culprits" of this development, claiming that he substantiated the idea that civilisation is allegedly the result of humanity's fall, and advanced a slogan the import of which was to emancipate man from that civilisation's false values and convert him into a healthy animal guided by instincts.[3]

The "historical culturologist" trend, which has its sources in Schopenhauer, Nietsche, and Spengler, is close to the conservative current as regards its negative attitude to progress and the social force embodying it.

For supporters of the idea of a "historical cycle" there is no real progress in the final analysis. The problem of its social motive force is also thus "removed". "The man born to dominate may use the masses, but he despises them"—such is their maxim.[4]

Not all of them, of course, take such a politically reactionary stand as, for example, Spengler. But objectively they all, including the

---

[1] Hermann Rauschning, *Die Zeit des Deliriums*, Verlag Amstutz Herdeg and Co., Zurich, 1947, S. 135-36.

[2] Gerhard Ritter, *Die Dämonie der Macht*, Stuttgart, 1947.

[3] Hermann Rauschning, *Masken und Metamorphosen des Nihilismus*, Humboldt-Verlag, Frankfurt a/M., Wien, 1954, S. 174.

[4] O. Spengler, *Jahre der Entscheidung*, Part 1, Verlags Buch Handlung, München, 1933, S. 145.

coryphaeus of twentieth-century historical science, Arnold Toynbee, deny real social progress, and so the revolutionary force directly or indirectly guiding it.

A rather different treatment of the problem of progress, and consequently of its driving force, is given in the work of the bourgeois liberal school. Most of its spokesmen recognise social progress as an inalienable part of historical development but, by treating it idealistically, they look for its driving force only in the ideological, mental sphere. An insistent, if not fixed, preaching of the unsurpassable significance of bourgeois democracy's eternal values, ideas of the automatic victory of reason, and a conviction of the fortuitous nature of everything that does not admit of a rational explanation are characteristic of work of this type.

In its general outlines the historical philosophical scheme of the Italian bourgeois philosopher Benedetto Croce fits into the context of this treatment. According to him the mainspring of the historical process is moral will understood as consciousness and will to freedom. It is in freedom that the eternal moral and ethical ideal to which mankind is striving is displayed.[1] There is simply no place in this scheme for the concept even of a leading social force of social and historical progress.

On those occasions when the spokesmen of this trend pose the question of the class that is the vehicle of social progress, the role of the proletariat as such is resolutely rejected. This approach is distinctly traceable in the many works of American bourgeois historiography devoted to the 200th anniversary of the War of Independence and proclamation of the United States of America. According to several authors it was not the labouring masses, including the workers, and not their struggle, but the bourgeoisie and the legacy of the bourgeois revolutions that have determined the course of world events and the fate of mankind over the past 200 years (and will determine it in the future).[2] Many of the fundamental theses of this line of argument, aimed above all at extolling the "historical services" of capitalist entrepreneurs in every way, were developed long ago by the different streams of bourgeois historiography, viz. the followers of the social right school (Rudolf Stammler, Karl Diehl, and others) and the new historical school of Gustav Schmoller, the ideologists of institutionalism (Thorstein Veblen), the business historians, the

[1] Benedetto Croce, *La storia come pensiero e come azione*, Gius Laterza & Figli, Bari, 1965, pp. 42-50.

[2] H. S. Commager, "America and the Enlightenment".—In: *The Development of a Revolutionary Mentality*, Library of Congress, Washington, 1972, pp. 7-29; J. P. Greene, *The Reinterpretation of the American Revolution 1763-1789*, New York, 1968; *idem*. "The Preconditions for American Republicanism". A Comment.—In: *The Development of a Revolutionary Mentality*, pp. 119-23.

neoliberals, and the managerism school (Joseph Schumpeter, and others).

As a rule they declare the social driving force of world history in modern and recent times to be the bourgeoisie (its progressive historical role being very arbitrarily transferred from the time of the American and French bourgeois revolutions to subsequent periods) or the petty-bourgeois strata of town and country, or finally the "technocracy".[1]

The means used for this purpose now, and in the past, include idealisation of the historical role of non-proletarian strata, and a playing down of the sharpless of the class contradiction between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. In its extreme form it finds expression, as before, in a theory of identity of the interests of capital and labour and of universal harmony as a consequence of free competition.

A certain "tradition" had been built up in this sense, stemming from bourgeois historians who were contemporaries of the events analysed in this volume. A theory of consent, according to which proletarians' appearance on the historical stage, like that of the bourgeois, was a consequence of human society's being almost voluntarily divided, as a result of a contractual agreement, into owners of labour and owners of capital for the sake of encouraging accumulation of capital. Such ideas were preached in particular, in the early nineteenth century, by E. G. Wakefield, J. Molinari, and other "mild, Free-trade, vulgar economists"[2] like them, and by a number of other writers who proclaimed capitalists to be almost the only productive workers in the highest sense of the term.

The ideas of those who, while not denying the class struggle, endeavoured to gloss over the radical opposition between the bourgeoisie and proletariat by putting forward the thesis, in particular, of a coincidence of the principal interests of the undifferentiated "middle estate" or "middle class", were more subtle.[3] In that respect

---

[1] F. A. Hayek (Ed.), *Capitalism and the Historians*, Chicago Press, Chicago, 1954; W. H. G. Armytage, *The Rise of the Technocrats. A Social History*, Routledge and K. Paul, London-Toronto, 1965.

[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 721.

[3] For a critique of these conceptions see, for example: G. V. Plekhanov, "Initial Phases of the Class Struggle Theory".— In: *Selected Phylosophical Works*, Vol. II. Eduard Bernstein, Herbert Lederer, Werner Sombart, and others made attempts to replace the Marxist concept "proletariat" by the category "middle classes". The thesis of the absence of radical antagonisms between workers and capitalists is the basis of the ideas of a number of liberal and reformist historians of the period of imperialism (e.g., the Fabians Sidney and Beatrice Webb, J, L. and B. Hammond, and G. D. H. Cole). Like views are preached in modified form by contemporary bourgeois and reformist ideologists who deny the proletariat's revolutionary potentialities (W. Conze, W. Schieder, and others), and who belittle the significance of Marxism (J. Braunthal and others).

a definite continuity is traceable between the views of the bourgeois liberal historians and economists of the first half of the last century and those of the reformists of succeeding generations. The line of this continuity can be drawn from bourgeois apologists of the type of J. B. Say and Frédéric Bastiat.[1]

As regards the initial stages of the working class' struggle a favourite way of minimising its historical role is to give a false evaluation of the social driving forces of the early bourgeois revolutions of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

For bourgeois and social-reformist historiography it is typical to try and write down the role of the labouring masses (including the nascent proletariat) in the revolutionary battles and transformations of that time.[2]

Attempts to exaggerate the objective and subjective opportunities at the disposal of the proletarian masses, who were then unable to carry out independent, conscious political actions on a large, nationwide scale, are just as unfounded: that is the cardinal fault of the views of leftist historians like Guérin. Losing historical perspective they forget that the antagonism of labour and capital was then at such a stage that, although wage labourers could, and more and more often did, make their rights and interests known, on the one hand, they fought together with the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, against the nobility, which reflected the main social contradiction of that historical epoch.[3]

Marx and Engels gave a comprehensive description of the degree of development of the opposition between the proletariat and bour-

---

A well-argued rebuff is given to views of that kind in M. A. Suslov, *Selected Speeches and Articles*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1972 (in Russian); from *The History of Marxism and the International Working-Class Movement*, Moscow, 1973.

[1] J. B. Say rejected any idea that capitalists exploited workers (see J. B. Say. *Traité d'économie politique*, Paris, 1841. Frédéric Bastiat wrote about the "harmony of interests between the workmen and those who employ them" (*Harmonies économiques*, Meline, Caus et compagnie, Brussels, 1850, p. 16).

[2] Bernstein, one of the founders of revisionism, considered the action of the "true Levellers" an insignificant episode in the English bourgeois revolution of the seventeenth century, almost unconnected with its cardinal tasks (E. Bernstein, *Sozialismus und Demokratie in der Grossen Englischen Revolution*, Dietz Verlag, Stuttgart, 1922.)

Many contemporary bourgeois research workers, by falsifying the social ideals of the "true Levellers", detach them from the evolution of the later ideology of socialism. They say that the fighters for social justice in England in the 1640s "did not look forward, but back". A developed scientific critiques of these ideas has been given in the work of several Soviet historians (see, for example, M. A. Barg, The *Lower Orders in the English Bourgeois Revolution of the Seventeenth Century. The True Levellers' Movement and Ideology*, Moscow, 1967).

[3] Daniel Guérin, *La lutte de classes sous la Premiere République*, Vol. 1, Gallimard, Paris, 1946).

geoisie in their writings.[1] Their methodological pointers have served as the starting point for a number of studies by Soviet and progressive historians.[2]

A common form of denying the social and historical role of the proletariat is the attacks of bourgeois ideologists on the scientific definition of a class given by Marx and Engels. The traditions of this were laid back in the nineteenth century in the works of Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and, later on, Max Weber and other luminaries of bourgeois sociology. Among their followers in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism we find, alongside out-and-out apologists for capitalist social relations, quite a few right and left revisionists who flaunt a Marxian phraseology. One group of bourgeois-reformist authors and right-wing revisionist ideologists counterpose a "non-economic conception of 'social class'" to Marxist teaching on classes,[3] thus glossing over the fact that class is examined dialectically in Marxism, not only as an economic concept but also as a broader social one. Similar views are common to certain ideologists of the New Left who either hold that the main class contradiction has shifted from the economic basis to the sphere of the superstructure or, uncritically repeating the views of the American bourgeois sociologist Warner and his followers,[4] treat the concept "class" as a psychological phenomenon.

[1] See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Manifesto of the Communist Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, pp. 477 519; Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, pp. 310-12.

[2] See in particular: Albert Soboul, *Les sans-culottes parisiens en l'an II. Histoire politique et social des sections de Paris. 2 juin 1973—9 thermidor an II*, L'Université de Paris, La Roche-sur-Yon, 1958; Albert Mathiez, *La vie chère et le mouvement social sous la terreur*, Payot, Paris, 1927; Georges Lefevre, *Questions agraires au temps de la terreur*, Strasbourg, 1932; V. G. Revunenko, *Marxism and the Problem of the Jacobin Dictatorship*, Leningrad, 1966. *idem*. On the Social Essence of the Herbertist Movement, *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, 1974, 4: 56-69; *idem*. The Downfall of the Hebertists. *Voprosy istorii*, 1974, 6: 133-45; Herbert Apthekar, *The American Revolution, 1763-1783*, International Publishers, New York, 1960; Anthony Bimba, *The History of the American Working Class*, International Publishers, New York, 1927; Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labour Movement in the United States from Colonial Times to the Founding of the American Federation of Labour*, International Publishers, New York, 1947, pp. 32-47; A. V. Yefimov, *The USA. Roads of Capitalist Development—Pre-imperialist Epoch*, Moscow, 1969 (in Russian).

[3] Dennis H. Wrong, "How Important Is Social Class? The Debate Among American Sociologists", *Dissent*, 1972, Vol. XIX, No. 1: 278-285; Stanislaw Ossowski, *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness*, Macmillan Free Press, New York, 1963; Ralf Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, Stanford, Cal., 1959; Harold Wilensky, *Class, Class Consciousness and American Workers* in William Haber, ed. "Labour in a Changing America", New York, Basic Books, 1966.

[4] W. L. Warner, *Structure of American Life*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1952.

Another group asserts that the "very idea" of natural growth of the proletariat as an important condition for performance of its revolutionary mission is untrue in its very basis.[1] In addition it advances the thesis that "a clearly defined working class", and in general the scientific concept "class", "no longer exists, if it ever did".[2] That view is held, for example, by certain present-day ideologists of "technocracy".[3]

The main theoretical basis of their attacks on the Marxist concept of class is refusal to consider property relations as an objective criterion to define a class. That position has been reproduced today by many Western sociologists. The specialist in "urban sociology", Gans, well known in the West, reviving as it were the conceptions of ideologists of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois socialism (in particular of Proudhon), says that one of the main attributes determining membership of one class or another is the difference between people associated with the character of their work.[4] He not only ignores the circumstance that "modern class distinctions are by no means based upon 'craft', and that on the contrary 'the division of labour brings about very *different* modes of work within the same class'",[5] but also tries to reduce the class struggle to "craft-bickering".

In this respect certain left-extremist petty-bourgeois ideologists also link up with the bourgeois reformist authors who appeal to the sociological critique of Marx's doctrine of classes. In attacking Marxism they interpret the consequences of the social division of labour incorrectly and dispute Marx's fundamental theoretical conclusions about the character of the proletariat's development.

Whereas scientific socialism proceeded and still does from recognition of a natural rise in the weight of the working class among the gainfully employed population, its opponents, including right and left revisionists, affirm the contrary. Propagandising a concept of "deproletarianisation", they interpret the changes in the social structure of bourgeois society as a gradual disappearance of the working class. Despite the facts they deny the import of Marx and Engels' conclusions about an inevitable deepening of the proletar-

---

[1] Irving Howe, "Sweet and Sour. Notes on Workers and Intellectuals" *Dissent*, 1972, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 264.

[2] H. L. Wilensky, op. cit., pp. 12-28.

[3] Clark Kerr, *Marshall, Marx and Modern Times. The Multi-Dimensional Society*, Cambridge University Press, 1969.

[4] Herbert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers*, New York, 1965; *idem. The Levittowners*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1967.

[5] Karl Marx, "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality".— In: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 330.

ianising process and, by falsifying actual reality, "dissolve" the working class into the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois medium.

Leftist constructions, in particular, designed to eliminate the doctrine of the proletariat's revolutionary mission by declaring the petty-bourgeois and lumpen-proletarian strata the main driving force of social progress, are also built on that basis.

Such views were defended by Proudhon in his works. They were present in the conceptions of several other anarchist ideologists, and Bakunin, too, later fought for them. Himself lauding the role of the lumpen-proletarian lower classes in the historical development of several European countries, he accused Marx and Engels of having "spoken with the crudest contempt" about "the wretched proletariat", while, he said, "*only it ... contains all the mind and all the force of the coming social revolution.*" At the same time his supporters, to counterbalance "Marx's socialist school" (as Bakunin himself stressed) staked everything on a "general revolt" of the peasantry.[1]

This evaluation of the leading social force in the revolutionary transformation of society was also typical of anarchism in subsequent historical periods. It is often held not simply by anarchist theoreticians but also by other spokesmen of a petty-bourgeois standpoint close to them. In countries with a medium level of development of capitalist relations, a twentieth-century petty-bourgeois theoretician says, "the future main political conflicts ... will not derive from the opposition between the interests of the owners of the means of production and the proletariat; rather the main source of political conflict would be the conflicting interests of the growing middle class and the growing unemployed and underemployed sectors of the working class."[2]

In deepening the fallacies of the "luminaries" of anarchism some opportunists have not limited themselves to their having "dissolved" the proletariat into the general mass of the have-nots. They have put forward a thesis about groups that "substitute proletariats" as the revolutionary forces.

Harrington, a leading social-reformist ideologist in the United States, has declared that, as world history develops, it has "become ever more difficult" for "true revolutionaries" to act in the name of the working class. So peasants, the urban poor, military officers

---

[1] M. Bakunin, *State and Anarchy*, Geneva, 1873 —quoted from K. Marx, *Summary of Bakunin's Book "State and Anarchy"* (Staatlichkeit und Anarchie).— In: Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1969, Bd. 18, S. 599, 628.

[2] Glaucio Ary Dillon Soares, "The New Industrialisation and the Brazilian Political System", (Ed.) *Latin America. Reform or Revolution. A Reader*, (Fawcett Publications, New York, 1968), p. 196.

and educated elites have at different times been assigned the role Marx had designed for the organised working people.[1]

The emergence of these strata, "this substitute proletariats", is alleged to be of the "most profound significance",[2] because, he says, Marxists' hopes that the proletariat of the West would ultimately fulfil its revolutionary destiny—have not come true. Special attention is paid to the "new lumpen-proletariat", which by its position in society is strikingly similar to those earlier lumpen-proletarians: urban, but not working class, and poor to the point of reckless desperation.[3]

The theoreticians of petty-bourgeois radicalism, who in Harrington's opinion "are modern Bakuninists",[4] have based their strategy on the conduct of this declassed stratum.

Theoretical attempts to justify replacing the proletariat by the lumpen-proletariat are fraught with serious political consequences, for it is a matter of social groups that are very different from one another. The working class, occupying a key position in the system of social production, is the producer of the basic social wealth. And it is associated, moreover, with the most advanced forms of production. In contrast the lumpen-proletariat is the "passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society".[5] The existence of a lumpen-proletariat is evidence of the inhuman essence of capitalism, which constantly creates a mass layer of "outcasts", pushed out of men's social affairs. The lumpen-proletariat, by virtue of its social position, felt (and feels) hostility toward the system of exploitation and the oppressor classes, but a negative attitude to society as a whole is at the same time typical of it. It does not value the achievements of world culture, and its ideals do not go further than a primitive redistribution and a crude, egalitarian pseudo-communism.

Whereas the proletariat by virtue of its position and place in the system of social production is a disciplined and organised class, the lumpen-proletariat on the contrary is inclined to be disorganised and easily responds to reaction's social demagogy, all of which frequently pushes it into foolhardy acts of rebellion. These revolts could not be either sustained in revolutionary fashion or historically promising. In stressing that "the proletariat alone is a really revolu-

---

[1] Michael Harrington, *Socialism*, Saturday Review Press, New York, 1972, p. 217.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 235.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The Manifesto of the Communist Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 494.

tionary class",[1] Marx and Engels at the same time pointed out that the lumpen-proletariat "may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue".[2] World history has confirmed that more than once.

Banking on the lumpen-proletariat entails a danger of compromising revolutionary, proletarian ideals, and consequently of isolating the social forces striving for radical social reforms. It can have abuse of progressive slogans as a consequence, and their use for aims openly hostile to human progress. Reactionary forces, as the historical experience of the nineteenth century has shown, in particular, employed the extremism of lumpen-proletarian psychology and activity to justify their conservative, defensive policies.

Extolling of the historical, transforming role of the petty-bourgeois masses is just as harmful for the cause of social progress. The urban and rural petty bourgeoisie are victims of the capitalist social system, and that is the basis for their actions against the consequences of capitalist exploitation and for bringing out opportunities for their joint action with the working class. At the same time, the petty bourgeois are only revolutionary "in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat, they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat".[3]

To ascribe an independent revolutionary mission to this social group means in fact to sabotage the process of radical social reforms, or to justify such a stand.

Attempts to minimise the working class' world historical mission, which have their own long history, by lauding the role of the petty bourgeoisie, show very distinctly in the conceptions defended by Prof. Barrington Moore. In striving to refute the Marxist proposition of the proletariat's historical mission (and at same time the doctrine of socio-economic formations) he develops an idea of the three main routes (or types) of human society's evolution. The first route is that of bourgeois revolutions leading to capitalist democracy, in which a decisive role is ascribed to the relations between the peasantry and landowners, and the main field of research is the modern history of Great Britain, France, and the United States. The second route "amounts to a form of revolution from above", which is "the capitalist and reactionary form", in which the bourgeois-democratic impulse is manifested much more weakly, which

---

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, "The Communist Manifestto", *Collected Works* Vol. 6, p. 494.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

culminated in fascism, as happened in Germany and Japan. The third route is the peasant revolution leading to communism. The huge peasantry is represented as the main disruptive force overthrowing "the old order", and the central field of study is taken as the countries of the world socialist community.[1] In this scheme the impact of the proletariat's struggle on social and historical development in modern and recent times is ignored altogether, as it is not difficult to see, and the leading role of the working class in victorious socialist revolutions in particular is slurred over.

The reformist theoretician Sternberg was formally far removed in his works on problems of the workers' movement, from the scheme proposed by Moore. Outwardly he sometimes stuck to Marxist terminology and claimed to continue the traditions of the materialist study of history, but as soon as it touched on the proletariat's transforming mission his position came close in essence to the views of this apologist for petty-bourgeois spontaneity. The main aim of the attacks on Marx that Sternberg resorted to was to try and show that Marx allegedly overestimated the role of the proletariat, i.e., was wrong on the main point.

A specific form of fighting Marxist teaching on the working class's world historical mission is the tendency that has become particularly common in the West in recent decades to counterpose the patterns defining the proletariat's evolution from early times to the late decades of the nineteenth century to the specific character of its position in society in the twentieth century. The adherents of this conception are ready for greater persuasiveness to recognise the validity of Marx's conclusions in regard to the working class of the past century, but they reject application of Marx's analysis to the modern period with all the more persistence and insistance. The well-known theoretician of Austrian Social-Democracy, Karl Renner, was an active proponent of this approach in his day. In reformist circles in the West they are still fond of citing these words of his uttered not long before his death: "I have been re-reading Marx's *Capital*. On the margins of each chapter I have had to note how different things have become today."[2] This point of view was embraced subsequently not only by many social-reformists but also by bourgeois writers in Great Britain, France, the United States, and other capitalist countries.[3] "The heroic proletariat in the sense

[1] Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy. Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1967, pp. xiv-xvii.

[2] See, in particular, L. Laurat, "Il 'Capitale' di Carlo Marx (1867-1967)", *Critica Sociale*, 1967, 19: 517.

[3] Typical in this respect were the papers of Hooke, Aron, Bell, and others at the international conference held in the United States on the influence of Marxism in the modern world. The papers of the conference were published in

it was given by Marx, Engels, and Lenin is no more," the West German philosopher Schak says in his book *Revision of Marxism-Leninism*. "Consequently there is no emancipation of the proletariat in the interests of all mankind."[1]

That statement provides the key to understanding the real underlying motive of the thesis that Marx's analysis of the working class's emancipating mission is inapplicable in twentieth-century conditions. If the basic characteristic features determining the transforming social role of the proletariat have disappeared, or been transformed in principle, by historical developments since Marx's time, that would mean that his conclusions and the whole incontrovertibility of his studies are limited and that the proletariat's mission was completed in the last century. In other words, an integral, highly important component of Marxism—the doctrine of the proletariat's world historical mission—is, as it were, eliminated.

Since Marxism was the first theory to put the investigation of social processes on a truly scientific basis, one line of ideological attack on it was and remains attempts to cast doubt on its very scientific character.

Official bourgeois science, of course, gave Marx's epochal work *Capital* a hostile reception. In one of the first reviews of Volume I, the anonymous author (presumably the bourgeois economist Faucher) denied the work's original character and proclaimed Marx himself a pupil of the vulgar economists.[2] In the second half of the nineteenth century a whole school of *Katheder-Sozialismus* (Academic Socialism) embracing mainly professors of various universities attacked Marxism. The "Academic socialists" Schmoller, Brentano, Lavalle, and Sombart exerted enormous efforts to try and refute the premises of Marxist economic theory. They started from the assumption that Marx's work was based on an "abuse" of the deductive method.[3]

That line of criticism of Marxism's scientific character has come to life again today in rather a changed form. The American anti-

---

the following books: *Marxism in the Modern World*, Stanford, Cal., 1965, and *Marxist Ideology in the Contemporary World—Its Appeals and Paradoxes* (1966). The same conceptions are typical of the books of Wolfe, Lichtheim, Schlesinger, and other bourgeois "Marxologists": Bertram D. Wolfe, *Marxism. One Hundred Years in the Life of a Doctrine*, Dial Press, New York, 1965; George Lichtheim, *Marxism: a Historical and Critical Study*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1961; Rudolf Schlesinger, *Marx, His Time and Ours*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1950.

[1] H. Schak, *Die Revision des Marxismus-Leninismus*, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 1965, S. 92.

[2] *Vierteljahrschrift für Volkswirtschaft und Kulturgeschichte*, 1868, Bd. 20.

[3] See *Essays in the History of the Ideological Struggle Around Marx's "Capital"*, Moscow, 1968 (in Russian).

Communist Wolfe said in his book on the century since publication of *Capital*, for example: "History ... has ruled against its dynamic schemata.... But of *Das Kapital*'s basic intellectual structure nothing now stands up."[1]

The West German revisionist ideologist Falk goes even further in his denial of Marxism's scientific character, declaring it to be "the negation of all the vast ... knowledge accumulated over 2000 years of cultural development".[2]

Social-reformists, too, have made their contribution to denying Marxism's scientific character. A clear hostility to its scientific aspect is traceable in the work of English opportunists of the last third of the nineteenth century, including the ideologists of Fabian socialism. The trend was manifested particularly clearly a little later, at the turn of the century, when the contradiction between the revolutionary and opportunist trends in the international working-class movement became much sharper.

Having posed the question in the title of his booklet *How Is Scientific Socialism Possible?*, Bernstein tried to substantiate a negative reply. "The basis of any real science [he said] is experience; it builds its edifice on accumulated knowledge. Socialism is the doctrine about a coming social order and that is why its characteristic features cannot be given a strictly scientific statement in it."[3]

Bernstein's present-day followers also resort to similar arguments. Thus the right-wing Social-Democrat Ulrich Lohmar tries, in papers published in the 1970s, to throw doubt on the scientific character of Marxism by depicting it as exclusively a "politically oriented conception".[4]

In his day Plekhanov, answering the Bernsteinists, caustically wrote: "If Mr. Bernstein were right in saying that there can be no 'ism' science, then obviously Darwinism, for example, could not be a 'science'.... If the old idea that the present is pregnant with the future is just, then scientific study of the present should give us a chance to judge about the future, not on the basis of mysterious oracles of some sort or arbitrary or abstract reasoning of any kind, but precisely on the basis of the knowledge accumulated by science. If Mr. Bernstein had wanted to go seriously into the question he asked himself about the possibility of scientific socialism, he would have seen that the impossibility of scientific socialism's existence

---

[1] Bertram D. Wolfe, op. cit., p. xi.

[2] Heinrich Falk, *Die Ideologischen Grundlagen des Kommunismus*, Gunter Olzog Verlag, Munich, 1961, S. 7.

[3] Eduard Bernstein, *Wie ist wissenschaftlicher Sozialismus möglich?* Ein Vortag, Berlin, 1901, S. 35.

[4] Ulrich Lohmar, Der Marxismus-Leninismus als Ideologie ist eine strategische Zielkonzeption, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, Bonn, 1973, 8: 36.

can only be demonstrated when it becomes patently impossible to make a scientific forecast of social phenomena."[1]

Subsequent developments, of course, fully confirmed the justice of the Marxist criticism of Bernstein's arguments. The unsoundness of conceptions that distort the scientific character of Marxist teaching was demonstrated by events themselves.

To bring out the working class's role and the main stages in the development of the proletarian movement a historical analysis only is not enough, or just an economic one, or an exclusively philosophical one. Comprehensive substantiation of the proletariat's mission calls for an all-round approach, and an integral tying up of the results of the development of all Marxism's main components. It follows therefore that the doctrine of the working class and its social role reflects the essence of Marxism as an integrated theory. That is why bourgeois Marxologists and revisionist interpreters of Marxism put in much effort to dispute the integral unity and interconnection of the main components of scientific socialism, its integrated character, and the continuity of its creative development. To that end, in particular, they have tried to drive a wedge between the early Marx and the late Marx, and between Marx and Engels, and to find contradictions in their writings.[2]

These trends have been manifested in various forms and to various degrees in different concrete historical periods. At the turn of the century both Bernsteinists and ideologists of petty-bourgeois revolutionarism, including the theoreticians of anarcho-syndicalism, Jules Sorel, Arturo Labriola, Hubert Lagardelle, and others, were actively attacking the integrity of Marx's and Engels' teaching. Typically, both tried to make Marx and Engels "clash". The following passage from Labriola gives an idea of the techniques that were used for this.

"As for Engels, I am convinced that many times he has gone against [?!] the true spirit of Marxism; he adapted it time and again to the trivialities of day-to-day politics.... I consider it wrong to attribute the significance and value of genuinely Marxist doctrine to any of Engels's own constructs."[3]

---

[1] G. V. Plekhanov, "A Critique of Our Critics. Articles Against Bernstein", *Sochineniya*, Vol. 11, pp. 66, 67 (in Russian).

[2] For a developed scientific critique of ideas of this kind see: *Marxism and Our Time*, Moscow, 1968; V. V. Keshelava, *The Myth of the Two Marxes*, Moscow, 1963; idem. *Humanism, Real and Illusory*, Moscow, 1973; T. I. Oizerman, *The Problem of Alienation and the Bourgeois Legend About Marxism*, Moscow, 1974; T. T. Timofeyev, *The Working Class's World Historical Mission*, Moscow, 1968; P. N. Fedoseyev, *Marxism in the Twentieth Century*, Moscow, 1972; B. A. Chagin, *Marx's and Engels' Creation and Development of the Theory of Scientific Communism*), Leningrad, 1970, (all in Russian).

[3] A. Labriola, *Riforme e Revoluzione Sociale*, Lugano, 1906, pp. 138, 139.

What did Labriola and other anarcho-syndicalist ideologists mean by these "specifically Engelsian constructs"? The theory of coersion, it seems, and the doctrine of revolution, and the very understanding of the idea of socialism.[1] It is not surprising that, following Sorel, Labriola soon passed from criticism of Engels to censure of "the Communist idea of Marxism" as a whole.[2]

Manipulations of that kind have always been resolutely rebuffed by genuine Marxists. Lenin, sharply criticising, for example, Bogdanov's statement about the "outmoded character" of Engels' views, and the Narodnik Chernov's attempts in his *Marxism and Transcendental Philosophy* to oppose Engels to Marx (in particular, to accuse Engels of "naive dogmatic materialism" and "very crude materialist dogmatism"), stressed that "this is typical philosophical revisionism for it was only the revisionists who gained a sad notoriety for themselves by their departure from the fundamental views of Marxism".[3]

Although such philosophical revisionism becomes more and more refined at each new stage of social development, its ideological and social roots in the main remain the same as in the preceding historical periods.[4]

A reflection of Marxism's scientific and integral character as a

---

[1] Ibid., p. 175.

[2] For a polemic against Labriola's views see, in particular, G. V. Plekhanov, "A Critique of the Theory and Practice of Syndicalism", *Sochineniya*, Vol. 16, pp. 3-125.

[3] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, Moscow, 1968, p. 20.

[4] The comparison made by the Italian historian Timpanaro, when analysing the sources of the activation of attempts by certain writers in the West to dispute the integrity of Marxism and to "drive a wedge" between Marx and Engels for that purpose, is well worth noting. In the past, he remarked, and now, whenever some one philosophical trend has begun to be predominant in bourgeois ideology and culture (empirio-criticism, and later structuralism), there have been those who tried to interpret Marx's teaching so as to bring it as close as possible to the philosophical trend dominant in their circles. Someone is usually needed in these operations, on whom to throw everything in Marxism that should in the view of the revisionist ideologists, be got rid of. That "someone", Timpanaro noted, "is none other than Frederick Engels. Vulgar materialism or determinism? Naturalist metaphysics? Schematic and archaic Hegelianism? Marx is absolved of all these sins (evidently, because people have already "learned to read" him). Then Engels is reproached with having "contaminated" Marxism, by trying to simplify and vulgarise it. Thus the unneeded "materialist balast" is foisted onto him. And this "is typical not only of the vicissitudes of reformist ideology" but also of the various forms of revolutionism of an "extreme left" hue. While the modern social-reformist sees in Engels' materialism a denial of "humanism" and "freedom of the spirit", the ideologist of "left" extremism and petty-bourgeois revolutionism regards Engels' ideas "as the negation of voluntarism". (S. Timpanaro, "Engels, materialismo, 'liberto arbitrio'", *Quaderni piacentini*, 1969, 39: 86-122.)

doctrine and world outlook is the persistent theoretical and ideological struggle that Marx and Engels, and later Lenin, waged throughout their whole creative life. For a truly scientific character is impossible without discussion, without a determined fight for the truth and ruthless criticism of half-baked knowledge, ignorance, and anti-knowledge. The concept of integrity in turn is incompatible with eclecticism, and the coexistence of mutually exclusive, internally hostile, theoretical postulates.

Scientific communism's positions are also attacked by its opponents on that set of issues. The main trend of falsification in this case consists in trying, on the one hand, to twist Marx and Engels' views on the significance of ideological struggle in the working-class movement by attributing a self-sufficing character to them and on the other hand to minimise the significance in principle of their fight for the triumph of a revolutionary, proletarian, scientific theory and outlook on the world.

Falsifiers of the first type reduce the whole complicated history of the battle of ideas in the working-class movement to the "intolerance" of Marx and his supporters. In their time Bakunin and his anarchising associates distinguished themselves in particular in that respect. In recent decades their ranks have been reinforced by neo-anarchists, neo-Trotskyists, and Maoists. Some people among them (including spokesmen of official Peking historiography), in trying *post facto* to whitewash the disruptive activity of the leaders of the Communist Party of China on the international scene, are trying to erect schisms and splits into a "law" of the proletarian movements' evolution. For that purpose a point of view is ascribed to Marx and Engels according to which schisms are the sole means of overcoming disagreements in the working class's ranks. The great traditions and lessons of the struggle for unity of the revolutionary working-class movement, and to rally the broad masses of working men and all progressive forces around the proletariat in every possible way are accordingly ignored.

That kind of vulgarised conception has been resolutely rejected, of course, by Communists.

Reformist theoreticians flirting with Marxism, in turn, when regarding the history of the ideological struggle in the workers' movement, persistently stress the interpretation and mutual influence of mutually exclusive ideas, including those obviously harmful for the working class.

The views on the history of the working-class movement circulating in leading circles of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany (FRG) are very typical of this standpoint. According to them "one wing" (in the working-class movement of the nineteenth century) "got on with the other". "A comprehensive, creative and solidary

democracy—that was the common denominator of Marx and Lassalle, of Bebel and Bernstein".[1]

This approach, which is foreign to scientific socialism (both as regards the attitude to "solidary democracy" interpreted not in the proletarian but in a bourgeois-democratic sense and appraisal of the main problems of Marxism against doctrinairism and sectarianism), is a continuation of a line going back to the dogmas of Bernsteinism. Lenin, demonstrating the negative features of right-opportunist distortions of Marxism in his time, remarked that in Bernstein's prefaces on Marx and Engel's criticisms of various kinds of opportunists and doctrinaires, instead of a precise, clear and frank characterisation of the opportunist errors of Lassalle and Schweitzer which Marx and Engels exposed, one meets with eclectic phrases and thrusts, such as that "Marx and Engels were not always right in opposing Lassalle".[2] And then "These attacks have no purpose except to serve as a screen and embellishment for opportunism. Unfortunately, the eclectic attitude to Marx's ideological struggle against many of his opponents is becoming increasingly widespread among present-day German Social-Democrats".[3] That conclusion applies fully to the evaluation of the right-opportunist ideological conceptions circulating in West Germany today.

During their theoretical and practical activity Marx and Engels had, as we have already remarked, to carry on an untiring ideological battle against falsification and ignorance, idle chatter and twaddle, and half-baked intellectual vulgarisation. They elaborated the main methodological principles during that battle, and these retain their value to this day.

One of them is the scientific character of ideological polemic. "Socialism," Engels remarked, "since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science."[4] The scientific character of polemic meant for Marx and Engels the need to combine a reasoned criticism of untrue, and even more of obviously falsified views organically with a far-reaching, all-round positive treatment of the most important problems of revolutionary theory. It was not by chance that all Marx's and Engels' theoretical works have an essentially polemical character and that the polemics contain a profound substantiation of important theoretical propositions.

In addition to bringing out the class determined character of some one ideological or political position the Marxist approach to

---

[1] Willi Brandt, *Freidrich Engels und die soziale Demokratie*, Verlag Nane Gesellschaft, Bonn-Bad Godesberg, 1970, S. 38.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 552.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Frederick Engels, Preface to *The Peasant War in Germany*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 23.

ideological struggle posits establishing the epistemological roots of an ideological opponent's ideas and the logical confusion characteristic of them. In that connection both Marx and Engels paid great attention to criticising the metaphysical approach to study of the historical process, including the rise, formation, and development of the working class. That men are themselves the creators of history is a truth that has gripped public consciousness since at least the time of the Renaissance. But only a truly scientific, dialectical materialist approach to the study of world history as a single process, governed by law in all its diversity and contradictoriness, enables one to understand, in fact, "what determines the motives of people, of the mass of people, i.e., what gives rise to the clash of conflicting ideas and strivings? What is the sum total of all these clashes in the mass of human societies? What are the objective conditions of production of material life that form the basis of all of man's historical activity? What is the law of development of these conditions?"[1]

The main source of the contradictory aspiration of individuals living in an exploiter society is the differences in the position of the classes into which that society is divided, and on the conditions of their life. Only a scientifically substantiated theory of class struggle, therefore, could provide "the guidance ... for the discovery of the laws governing this seeming maze and chaos";[2] only such a theory makes it possible properly to analyse the whole "complex network of social relations and *transitional* stages from one class to another, from the past to the future", that is necessary "so as to determine the resultant of historical development".[3]

In order to understand the long, complicated road followed by the proletariat, it is exceptionally important to make an all-round, far-reaching analysis of the historical premises and conditions of its formation and moulding in different periods, including the earliest ones. In demonstrating the main, central themes that are associated with study of the real processes governing the birth of the working class and its subsequent growth, the origin of its revolutionary outlook on the world, and the creation of the principles of the proletarian vanguard's policy, Engels remarked that it was important to throw light on the history of the matter. During the period of the drafting of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* he wrote to Marx: "I begin: What is communism? And then straight to the proletariat—history of its origin, difference from workers in earlier periods, development of the antithesis between proletariat and bourgeoisie ... and in conclusion the Party policy of the Communists."[4]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 57.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., p. 59.
[4] Frederick Engels, "Letter to Marx in Brussels. 23/24 November, 1847". Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 40.

It is indicative that Lenin ascribed enormous importance to Engels' considerations, returned to them many times, and evaluated this document as a "historical letter".[1]

Breach of the principles of historicism, and the constructing of absolutised suprahistorical schemes or the creation of subjectivist conceptions, lead to minimising the proletariat's historical role, to vulgarising the complicated problems of the working people's age-long titanic struggle, to a discrediting of the goals of the working-class movement, and to distortion of the principles of the world outlook of the most advanced revolutionary class.

A one-sided approach to phenomena, a neglect of the complex interconnection of the processes taking place at the various levels of the social structure, a selecting of separate examples and facts are typical of non-Marxian conceptions of the formation and development of the working class, whereas an all-round, dialectical analysis is needed of the whole concatenation of the most important factors (economic, political, socio-psychological, ideological, etc.) that have furthered its consolidation, and led to maturing of the objective and subjective conditions galvanising the proletariat's class struggle and real progress in one historical period or another to consciousness and performance of its historical mission in order to bring out the patterns of the rise of the working class.

Marx and Engels started from the point that a proper appraisal of the working class's social and historical role is only possible when attention is paid to its universal character, in the truly scientific sense of the word. Any other approach is fraught with serious distortion of the real historical proportions, and consequently with a minimising of the historical merits of the most highly organised and militant (for their time) sections of the working class, and at the same time to exaggeration of the role, significance, and experience of the action of the pre-proletarian and lumpen-proletarian masses. In some cases an unscientific conception of universality is the basis for declaring the Marxist analysis of the formation and development of the working class to be Europocentric and for replacing it by an approach that has the real features of Asiacentrism.[2]

---

[1] See V. I. Lenin, "The Marx-Engels Correspondence", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 558; see also V. I. Lenin, *Conspectus of "The Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. 1844-1883"*), Politizdat, Moscow, 1959, p. 193.

[2] The *New World History* published in Shanghai is very indicative in this respect. In trying to fit the real historical process to their far-fetched geopolitical schemes, and by treating the concept "working class" in a distorted way (slipping in semi-proletarian strata and lumpen-proletarian elements in place of it) its authors on the one hand descry "proletarian revolutions" back in the period before the English bourgeois revolution of the seventeenth century, and on the other hand endeavour to bring the spontaneous actions of non-proletarian and pre-proletarian social groups in Asia and Africa to the foreground (including

The most important methodological principles of the ideological struggle elaborated by Marx and Engels include as well a strictly differentiated approach to ideological opponents according to the class determination of their positions. Marx and Engels consistently upholding the principles of party commitment, always determined the scale, forms, and tone of a polemic precisely in accordance with what class's interests were represented by their ideological opponents, and with whether they were dealing with open defenders of social relations based on the exploitation of man by man, or with confused people to whom the interests of the working people were not foreign.

Marx and Engels uncompromisingly scourged the "learned lackeys" of the bourgeoisie belonging to both its conservative and its liberal factions. While directing their main blow at openly anti-socialist bourgeois apologetic theories, they showed at the same time how to differentiate socialist doctrines of all shades and colours, "Socialism conscious and unconscious, Socialism prosaic and poetic, Socialism of the working-class and of the middle class".[1] While ridiculing "this momentary fashion among bourgeois circles of affecting a mild dilutim of Socialism", [2] they warned specially against confusing proletarian socialism and its bourgeois and petty-bourgeois perversions. As Engels wrote: "The very people who, from the 'impartiality' of their superior standpoint, preach to the workers a Socialism soaring high above their class interests and class struggles, and tending to reconcile in a higher humanity the interests of both the contending classes—these people are either neophytes, who have still to learn a great deal, or they are the worst enemies of the workers—wolves in sheep's clothing."[3]

At the same time the founders of Marxism constantly bore in mind the fact that the principles of scientific proletarian socialism were being defended (and would be) in conditions in which the working class, in fulfilling the role of the vanguard force of social progress, had to draw the whole progressive mass democratic movement after it, including those who were vehicles of a non-proletarian ideology. Noting the growth of the preconditions for establishing an alliance of the proletariat and the petty-bourgeois strata of the population, Marx and Engels emphasised that "the influx of petty-bourgeois and peasants bears witness, of course, to the movement's

ones that followed in the wake of semi-feudal movements), at the same time glossing over the significance of the creation of Marxism, the activity of the First International, and the role of the organised militant actions of the working class (see *Shize jindai shi*, Shang ce, Shanghai, 1973).

[1] F. Engels, "*Vorwort zur englischen Ausgabe der "Lage der arbeitenden Klasse"*", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 22, 1963, S. 277.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, 1962, S. 255.

enormous progress ... and proves that the proletariat has really become the leading class".[1] But this influx could be dangerous, "as soon as it is forgotten that these people join the movement only *because* they are forced to.... But because they arrive with petty-bourgeois and peasant ideas and aspirations, it must be remembered that the proletariat will not fulfil its historical leading role if it makes concessions to these ideas and aspirations".[2]

The fundamental conclusions of the Marxist doctrine of the world historical mission of the working class have been confirmed in a comprehensive way by the course of social development. In the 1870s the working classes in countries with a comparatively high level of capitalism already represented a serious social factor. The proletariat, becoming more and more conscious of itself as an independent revolutionary force, rallied and organised its ranks. Its first fighting actions served as harbingers of on-coming class battles destined to change the face of the world.

The truth of a doctrine is a most important premise of its victory in ideological battles. And it is not fortuitous that the bourgeois, reformist, national opportunist, and left extremist "critics" of Marxism have none of them succeeded, either then or in subsequent historical periods, in blocking its victorious march.[3]

Scientific defeat of unsound ideological conceptions, however, is not equivalent to their disappearance. Being an expression of certain class interests they are constantly being revived, altering their external form and mimicking a "new" approach to reality. These ideological conceptions, by battening on the constantly extending volume of the masses who have become the subject of historical action, may again, at certain stages, prove to be the object of attention of definite social strata. That applies first and foremost to anti-Marxist conceptions of the working class's role and place in the social and historical process. The ideological struggle in this field has therefore never subsided and continues in today's conditions. And at each new turn in the struggle, scientific communism inevitably wins more and more outstanding victories.

---

[1] Frederick Engels, "Letter to Bebel in Leipzig, 24 November 1879". Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 34, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1966, S. 425-26.

[2] Ibid.

[3] The problems of scientific communism's ideological struggle against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois doctrines, including that on the historiographic and sociological plane, are given special treatment in relation to the appropriate periods of the history of the international working-class movement in all the volumes of the present work.

Chapter 11

CONCLUSION

SOME RESULTS OF THE WORKING-CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE FIRST STAGES OF ITS DEVELOPMENT

On the threshold of the last third of the nineteenth century capitalist society had reached a divide marking the culmination of an important stage. Defining the principal features of the situation that had built up at that time in most developed countries, Marx emphasised that: "There is one great fact, characteristic of this our nineteenth century, a fact which no party dares deny. On the one hand, there have started into life industrial and scientific forces, which no epoch of the former human history had ever suspected. On the other hand, there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the later times of the Roman empire."[1]

The whole contradictory nature of the progress brought about by the establishment and consolidation of the capitalist system of social relations was manifested with much greater clarity than ever before. Machines that had the marvellous capacity to reduce human toil and make it more fruitful, brought people hunger and exhaustion. The new sources of wealth, hitherto unknown, were transformed into sources of poverty. "At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure light of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and intellectual life seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force."[2]

The extreme disparity between the level attained by industry and science, on the one hand, and the scale of poverty and decay, on the other, which reflected the fundamental contradiction between the productive forces and social relations, had been converted into a

---

[1] Karl Marx, "Speech at the Anniversary of the *People's Paper*", Karl Marx Frederick Engels, *On Britain*, FLPH, Moscow, 1953, p. 446.

[2] Ibid., p. 447.

tangible and indisputable fact. In keeping with that the social need not simply for radical social changes not only in the superstructure but also in the basis was becoming more and more tangible and indisputable.

"The so-called Revolutions of 1848 were but poor incidents—small fractures and fissures in the dry crust of European society. However, they denounced the abyss. Beneath the apparently solid surface, they betrayed oceans of liquid matter, only needing expansion to rend into fragments continents of hard rock."[1]

The objective course of the historical process more and more insistently stripped the veil from "the greatest mystery of the nineteenth century" (Marx), the mystery of the maturing social revolution: a new powerful, growing social force with a future, the working class, had been born, grown strong, and become conscious of its own interests and aspirations.

By the 1870s the proletariat of the countries industrially most developed, had travelled a long and complicated road, on which it had undergone major changes by which it had been transformed into an important social force. Having arisen in the milieu of the urban and rural plebs who were an integral part of the so-called third estate, the working class had grown numerically, clearly tracing a perspective of becoming the most massive category of the working people. The size of the proletariat had begun to be an index of the industrial development of various countries. Since this development proceeded very unevenly, the mass character of the proletariat in the different countries remained very dissimilar in degree. In Italy, Spain, and Eastern Europe it still constituted a comparatively small section of the working people. In Germany and in the United States, which in the 40s to 60s had entered a period of relatively broad introduction of the capitalist order, its weight in the social structure had noticeably increased. In France the proletariat already formed a mass social group, and in Great Britain it was a majority of the economically active population.

The qualitative characteristics of the proletariat had also altered, along with its numerical size. During the development of capitalist relations it had gone a considerable way from a social group mainly employed in agricultural and handicraft production, from the wage workers of manufacture to a factory proletariat. The degree of progress of the various national sections and groups of workers along this road, it goes without saying, was different in this case, too. The different level of development of capitalism in the different countries, which affected the size of the working class, left its mark also on its qualitative aspect. The relative weight of that category of the

[1] Ibid., p. 446.

proletariat that was integrally associated with the most modern forms of industrial production varied; it remained low in such countries as the Austrian Empire, Spain, and Italy, and had reached a comparatively high level in Great Britain.

The qualitative changes determining the inner structure of the working class were also due, in the main, to the uneven development of capitalism in the different spheres of social production. The parallel existence of machine industry, and of various types of manufactory, petty craft and semi-artisan production engendered by this unevenness predetermined the comparative stability of those sections of the proletariat that personified its future rather than its past. That was to be seen distinctly where the working class was already numerous.

The singling out of the proletariat as an independent social force had acquired broad dimensions.[1] A most important aspect of this process was social, political, and ideological differentiation of the working class from the bourgeoisie.

Elements of this differentiation had already been observed in the early stages of the formation of the proletariat as a class, because it was in fact objectively inherent in the system of capitalism's relations of production. But until these relations had attained some significant development, differentiation was displayed only as a trend or tendency. The contradictory character of the realisation of the antagonism between the two main classes of capitalist society had a far-reaching effect on it. The working class, brought into being by capitalist production, being a social force constantly oppressed and exploited by the bourgeoisie, was linked with this production by the basic conditions of work and living. Any substantial change of any kind in the forms of capital's operation and in the organisation of capitalist production told on its position. The leading trend of the proletariat's development, uncompromising struggle against the bourgeoisie, arises from its objective position as a class lacking private property, selling its labour power, and exploited. At the same time involvement in capitalist production created an illusion of "social co-participation", of a community of interests, and a nascent propensity to some form of social compromise or another.

A factor containing the process of differentiation was the rapid increase in the size of the working class. That came about, on the one hand, through the transformation of craft, artisan production into production based on pure buying and selling of labour power, and on the other hand to the extent that new spheres of the development of the productive forces arose. In the first case the numerical

---

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The Marx-Engels Correspondence", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 553.

growth of the working class was the result of a change in the social status of the former workers in handicraft production, master craftsmen and journeymen, in the second case, the demand for labour power arising was met through an influx of people from the countryside, ruined during capitalism's penetration of agriculture. Very often the change in social status was incomplete; there were many transitional forms in which elements of the old and the new social position were combined. In addition, many family ties linking the new workers to their old social milieu were preserved. The hereditary factory workers, moulded in production conditions of a new type, and the system of social connections determined by them, still constituted an insignificant minority in the structure of the working class in almost all countries.

The fact that in circumstances in which bourgeois relations of production had still not found adequate reflection in the political superstructure, or even in the social system, the vast volume of the tasks of the fight against the feudal shackles preventing normal development of bourgeois society gave rise to a certain coincidence of interests of workers, petty owners, and different sections of the class of capitalists. And although the extreme inconsistency of the bourgeoisie in the fight against feudal, absolutist regimes, its greediness and self-interest and growing fear of its major ally-cum-antagonist, reluctance to allow for the latter's interests and needs, and direct treachery were more and more revealed as the intermediate goals of the struggle were achieved and the main supports of the feudal system of domination shaken, it took a long time and the acquisition of experience for the various sections of the working class to become conscious of that.

For all that, and in spite of counteracting tendencies, the dissociation of the working class' advanced sections from the bourgeoisie had by the 1870s become an important factor in the distribution of social and political forces in the most developed countries.

The process of the separation of the working class as an independent social force had another aspect as well. In addition to differentiation from the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie there was a social, political, and ideological separation from the declassed groups of the population, that vague, motley mass of lumpens that Marx called the "scum", "offal", "refuse of all classes".[1]

The penetration of all countries without exception by capitalist relations was completed in a truly inhuman form, extremely painful for the working people, and was accompanied with unrestrained

[1] Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, p. 149.

impoverishment of the broad masses of the people. Because of the dismantling of the old social structures the ranks of the destitute were also reinforced by individual members and whole sub-strata of other social groups. The mounting poverty led to pauperism becoming a characteristic feature of public life. In the countries embraced by the industrial revolution a large, comparatively stable group arose as a result, that was outside production. The conditions of its existence made it potentially hostile to any organisation of society. At the same time, being outside the system of social relations, this group was only a weakly associated sum total of individuals pursuing purely personal, selfish aims and easily amenable to the influence of various political forces, reactionary ones included.

This mixed mass, which came to be called the lumpen-proletariat, was opposed in principle to the working class by its social nature. In real life, however, a sharp differentiation between them could only come about through a long, varied, and contradictory historical process.

An obstacle to separation of the proletariat out from the general mass of the destitute population was not simply the unity of the historical sources of their origin and the instability of the economic situation, as a result of which various groups of paupers were absorbed by developing industry; whole strata of the workers employed in dying industries, predominantly of an artisan or semi-artisan type, on the contrary, were being forced out of production into the ranks of declassed elements. It was also highly important that the living conditions of the majority of proletarians, especially in the first stages of the industrial revolution, did not differ in many ways from those of paupers. That created an illusion of an identity of their social interests that was reinforced by joint involvement in spontaneous revolts, and in political movements headed and led by the bourgeoisie.

Nevertheless, as the working class evolved, there was already in the period under review a zone of delimitation between proletarians and lumpens that became the wider the more both the feudal aristocracy and the new dominant class, the bourgeoisie, employed lumpen elements against the working class and democratic movement out of fear of the proletariat's growing strength. The active involvement of lumpen-mobile guards in the bloody suppression of the Parisian proletariat's June uprising in 1848 was not a fortuitous episode but a symptom of a very dangerous development. That was soon confirmed by the unqualified support given by the lumpen-proletariat to the Bonapartist *coup d'état* of the early 1850s and later to the reactionary regime established in France by that *coup*.

The growing political maturity of the working class is very clearly traceable when the evolution of its forms and methods of struggle

is analysed. Initially the proletariat's social protest differed little in its outward expression from the actions of the peasant masses and the urban plebs. It was primarily a spontaneous revolt aimed against extreme manifestations of the socio-economic contradictions of the capitalist formation and against the abuses of individual members of the bourgeoisie. Protest against the build up of poverty as an immanent companion of the industrial revolution sometimes took the form of a fight against the new technique and technology (Luddism). That line of protest, however, which reflected the socio-psychological mood of proletarians of the artisan-manufacture type rather than the factory type, was transient in spite of being comparatively common. The proletariat very early discovered, and more and more widely employed, such a typical proletarian method of struggle as the organised stoppage of work (strike).

During the whole period under review the strike struggle in its various forms constituted the core of most of the working class' actions. Several main trends clearly operated as it took shape. First of all there was a rise in the degree of organisation of the strike movement. Spontaneous, impulsive stoppages of work, as a reaction to the injustice of factory owners or managements, were supplemented by deliberate, pre-planned and organised actions.

This trend did not happen everywhere, of course, or with identical strength. Even at the end of the period spontaneous strikes still governed the general picture of the movement, even in the most industrially developed countries. There can be no comparison in level of organisation with the strike waves that have swept the capitalist world in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, when we compare the situation at the end of the 1860s with that which existed in the initial stages of the movement, the results of the changes that had taken place come out quite clearly.

A derivative of the level of organisation was the degree of improvement of the strike struggle's strategy and tactics. Compared with the very rich arsenal of militant actions that the working-class movement has in our day, the methods and forms of the strike struggle employed by the proletariat up to the last third of the nineteenth century were imperfect, but the foundations of the main forms that became characteristic of the class struggle in later periods had already been laid.

A tendency for the strike struggle to grow in scope was having no less an effect. The numbers of those involved in individual strikes increased from stage to stage, and also the number of strikes as such, and thereby the volume of the strike movement as a whole. In countries with the most developed and most numerous proletariat (like Britain) this trend was clearly visible even earlier.

This development, as now, was not, of course, continuous. The

strike struggle ebbed and flowed under the influence of the concrete economic and political situation. Even in "peak" periods right up to the beginning of the last third of the 19th century, it was far from approximating the mass actions of today in volume, but for its time it was already an important economic and political factor.

The development of the class struggle was also stimulated by a maturing of proletarian solidarity. In the concrete conditions of the time, and the comparatively low level of organisation of the working class and almost complete absence of ready funds that could be used to support strikes, the most effective way of demonstrating this solidarity was action in sympathy. In the early stage of the strike movement's growth sympathy strikes had already occurred which, while improving the effectiveness of militant actions, at the same time were a school of class struggle, taking the workers beyond a purely economic conflict on partial issues. Sympathy action, as a means of expressing workers' solidarity, was not restricted to the confines of individual areas or national territories. In the 1850s and 1860s the solidarity actions of the working class acquired clearly expressed international features.

Whereas the strike movement had been mainly defensive in character in the early stages, representing a reaction to the employers' drive to worsen wage workers' conditions of work and life, a tendency to reinforce its offensive content was displayed more and more as this form of struggle was consolidated and developed. Bodies of workers were emerging as an active force, deciding when a labour dispute would start and the scale of demands aimed at improving existing conditions.

The content of proletarian demands itself underwent changes. In accordance with the proletariat's degree of development, they reflected the total of its prime material needs and were concerned above all with the level of wages, forms of payment, work conditions directly on the shop floor, the length of the working day, the provision of minimum guarantees in regard to employment, and so on. But, as the class struggle developed, demands of another order were born: the idea of legal regulation of relations in industry in the form of developed factory legislation became more common. At later stages that idea merged with a striving to set up state and collectivist, group undertakings. The illusory character of the expectations associated in most cases with the realisation of such demands did not weaken the positive value they had at the time as a stage on the road from narrow economic struggle to actions of a much higher, social and general political order.

The gradual switching of the object of struggle from the "bad boss" to the capitalists in the aggregate, who were more and more clearly seen as a hostile social force, had an analogous significance. The

true role of the state machinery only became more or less obvious in the last decades of the period being studied, and then only to individual advanced groups of the working class. For a considerable part of the working people the class functions of the capitalist state remained unclear. But switching of the struggle from the purely industrial front to the state, and that meant the political front, was already becoming, and in separate more developed countries, had already become, a pressing objective.

The character of the bourgeoisie's influence on the state machinery was primarily defined by its type, by the degree to which forms of government linked with out-of-date feudal relations had been overcome, and the extent to which the political system had been adapted to the needs of capitalist development. In countries where there had been a substantial transformation of this superstructure in the course of bourgeois revolutions (e.g. in England), the struggle was fought with the aim of using the bourgeois parliamentary machinery. Where the process of adaptation had come to a halt or had been reversed through the triumph of counter-revolution, the fight for state regulation of relations in industry was transformed, in some cases, into an armed confrontation with the existing political system.

The historical stage under review was thus marked by active involvement of the working class in political struggle, including its most acute, revolutionary forms. The character of this involvement varied substantially depending on the scale of the objectives put forward in the course of the fight, the bourgeoisie's readiness to make concessions, the proletariat's maturity, and the extent to which it was differentiated from other social groups, i.e. the extent to which it was constituted as an independent social force.

In the early bourgeois revolutions of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries the forming proletariat acted as a constituent of the peasant-plebeian opposition to feudalism that formed the most radical wing of the revolutionary camp headed by the bourgeoisie. The slogans put forward by the "forerunners of the modern proletariat" (Engels) were in the current of bourgeois-democratic demands, as a rule, and only sometimes went beyond them. The most resolute faction of the bourgeoisie made use of the popular masses' strength in the interests of fighting feudalism. Though the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie sometimes acquired a sharp character it was not often, however, consciously realised.

In the bourgeois revolutions of a later stage the conduct and aims of the driving forces alter. The specific character of the working class' interests came out more distinctly. Hostile by nature to the class interests of the bourgeoisie it faced the latter with a situation of war on two fronts. The resoluteness of the bourgeoisie in the fight against the superstructures of the feudal-absolutist system therefore

declined. The state machinery created by the old social system began to be considered a guarantor of the capitalistic socio-economic relations threatened by the working class' actions. The bourgeoisie's readiness to achieve the full scope of bourgeois-democratic reforms weakened. The proletariat's role in the realisation of these reforms as a *sine qua non* of social progress, and so of the emancipation of the working class itself, correspondingly grew. The bourgeois-democratic slogans, when inscribed on proletarians' fighting banners, not only did not contradict the workers' specific demands but even merged organically with them, becoming filled with a new, in essence anti-capitalist content ("the social republic").

For the European revolutions that took place around the middle of the nineteenth century in the capitalistically most developed countries, a distribution of social and political forces close to the variant just described was characteristic, while a distribution of political forces in the revolutionary movement of countries less advanced on the road of capitalism, with features typical of the first variant above, predominated.

The various forms of struggle were closely interwoven in real life, passing into one another at every step. Political actions also contained purely economic demands, while strike battles served as an instrument to influence the political system. Movements that initially posed limited political aims developed into revolutionary battles directed against the system as a whole. Conversely, political actions outwardly turned against the foundations of the state machinery frequently, in the long run, in the absence of the objective preconditions, boiled down to a fight for economic concessions.

It is fitting to recall Lenin's words here from his foreword to Marx's and Engels' correspondence covering the period after 1844. "There unfolds before the reader a strikingly vivid picture of the history of the working-class movement all over the world—at its most important junctures and in its most essential points. Even more valuable is the history of the *politics* of the working class. On the most diverse occasions, in various countries of the Old World and the New, and at different historical moments, Marx and Engels discuss the most important principles of the *presentation* of the *political* tasks of the working class. And the period covered by the correspondence was a period in which the working class separated from bourgeois democracy, a period in which an independent working-class movement arose, a period in which the fundamental principles of proletarian tactics and policy were defined. The more we have occasion in our day to observe how the working-class movement in various countries suffers from opportunism ... the more valuable becomes the wealth of material contained in the correspondence, displaying as it does a most profound comprehension of the *basic*

aims of the proletariat in bringing about change."[1] As the working class matured as a social force, and consolidated its positions, political forms of struggle increased in significance. And although they did not yet play the role at the beginning of the 1870s that later fell to their lot, the working class had begun to enter the political scene increasingly vigorously as an independent and more and more influential social factor.

That circumstance inevitably faced the working class with the problem of political alliances.

The socio-economic structure even in countries comparatively far advanced on the road of capitalism remained extremely complicated. Social groups of a feudal provenance rubbed shoulders with groups engendered by capitalist development. The antagonism of the proletariat and bourgeoisie was materialised on a background of more or less acute clashes between the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, between the landowners and the peasantry, between Big Business and the petty bourgeoisie. The community of aspirations of the bulk of the people vitally interested in ending the aristocracy's domination (and correspondingly of the state machinery that served it, which was creating serious obstacles to society's progressive development), had its effect on this.

When examining the issue of the proletariat's allies, Marx and Engels paid special attention to the problem of the peasantry. They were convinced that the peasantry would act in support of the proletariat before capitalism's development led to its final class differentiation and so to its "erosion" as a social layer. Furthermore, they considered that the proletariat's revolutionary movement could not cope with the tasks facing it without that support.

Yet, in the nineteenth century, the peasantry only sporadically acted as an ally of the revolutionary proletariat. In countries where the bourgeois-democratic revolution has already been completed, its anti-feudal potential had been discharged, but class stratification had not gone too far in the peasant milieu for the overwhelming part of it, or a substantial part, to act as allies of the proletariat. That is how things stood in France, for example. In other countries, where the objectives of the bourgeois-democratic revolution had not been achieved, and the agrarian question had not been settled, the peasantry, coming into action during upsurges of popular movements, together with other revolutionary forces, helped the proletariat in its struggle from time to time and in separate places. So it was during the revolution of 1848-1849 in the German states and in the Austrian Empire. The progressive national movements in

[1] V. I. Lenin, "The Marx-Engels Correspondence", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, pp. 553-54.

the Hapsburg monarchy were generally substantially peasant as regards the social composition of their members. At the same time, in the period under review, the peasantry, as a consequence of its economic, social, and political backwardness, served as a tool in the hands of reactionary classes striving to suppress any revolutionary movement, above all proletarian ones.

By demonstrating that the peasantry's economic development and differentiation would lead its main mass to see a natural ally and leader in the proletariat, Marx and Engels oriented the international working-class movement and national sections of the proletariat on setting such democratic, and national emancipation, objectives as would meet the interests of the broad masses of the downtrodden and impoverished peasantry. They also paid much attention to relations between the factory proletariat on the one hand, and agricultural labourers, the urban petty bourgeois, and the lumpen-proletariat, on the other.

"The industrial workers of the towns find their *most numerous and most natural allies*" among the agricultural labourers, Engels emphasised.[1] Their situation was very similar to that of urban industrial workers and they shared the same conditions of existence. "To galvanise into life and to draw into the movement this class ... this is the immediate, most urgent task of the German workers' movement", he said.[2] The urban petty bourgeois, he remarked, are "extremely unreliable".[3] "Nevertheless, there are very good elements among them, who join the workers of their own accord."[4]

The lumpen-proletariat was "the worst of all possible allies", Engels estimated. "This rabble is absolutely venal and absolutely brazen. If the French workers, in every revolution, inscribed on the houses: *Mort aus voleurs*! Death to thieves! and even shot some, they did it, not out of enthusiasm for property, but because they rightly considered it necessary above all to keep that gang at a distance. Every leader of the workers who uses these scoundrels as guards or relies on them for support proves himself by this action alone a traitor to the movement."[5]

For all the need for political alliances that would unite the forces striving to remove feudal elements from socio-economic and political systems, a number of serious obstacles blocked the way to solution of the matter. The character of these alliances depends decisively on the balance of influence of each of its members. In the early stages of

---

[1] Frederick Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, Preface, FLPH, Moscow, 1956, pp. 24-25.
[2] Ibid., p. 26.
[3] Ibid., p. 23.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

its formation the proletariat, as we said above, acted together with the bourgeoisie and the quite motley petty-bourgeois masses. At that time the bourgeoisie assigned it a secondary, subsidiary role. Its separation out as a class altered the situation radically. Nevertheless, during this period the bourgeoisie persistently ignored that circumstance. As before it assigned the working class a subsidiary place in its political plans; workers were indulgently allowed to die on the barricades so as to clear the road to power for others. The petty bourgeoisie occupied a similar position. As soon as the working class insistently voiced its own demands, the bourgeoisie turned its weapons against it. And, as we noted above, it did not hesitate to reach compromises and form direct alliances with yesterday's opponents, the feudal aristocracy and bureaucracy.

For the working class itself solution of the matter of political allies was essentially complicated by several circumstances. In the historical perspective its separation was a *sine qua non* of the forming of subsequent political alliances based on a new balance of forces enabling the issue of the proletariat's hegemony to be posed. In the period under review, however, the drive to separate off naturally took precedence over tendencies to draw together. It was a necessary stage in the proletariat's development. Its actual weight in society, moreover, being much less than later on, did not yet give it the chance to define the direction of the political movements in which it was involved. Its influence on the outcome of these movements was consequently much weaker than its practical contribution to the struggle. When the working class rose under its own slogans it often proved isolated, deserted, and anathematised not only by the bourgeoisie but also by its petty-bourgeois allies (as happened in June 1848 in France).

The vital contradiction could only be resolved in the course of further consolidation of the working class' position as a social force, which would create the preconditions for establishing a new system of alliances corresponding to its historical role. And the contradiction was in fact solved, but much later, at a much higher stage of the working-class movement.

The struggle waged by the working class engendered a need for organisational forms that would ensure its effectiveness. The development of capitalist industry prepared the soil for that. The need for simple, and later complex co-operation necessitated functional and territorial concentration of wage labour. The more widely and deeply the capitalist relations penetrated the more significant the scale of this concentration became.

The concentration of great masses of people in separate industrial centres itself already furthered the establishment of a new complicated system of personal and social contacts between workers. The

organising effect of capitalist production, however, was not limited to that. The specific nature of the operation of capital inevitably led to an evening out of the conditions for the purchase and sale of labour power, to a convergence of proletarians' conditions and way of life. The character of the new productive forces that necessitated, as they grew, a corresponding heightening of the organisation of the production process, in turn introduced an element of order into the mass dispersed producers, dislodged from the former system of economic and social relations. The process was manifested in the period reviewed in the form of a tendency only. The concentration of wage labour had reached a high level of development only in England. In other countries, including those already engulfed by the industrial revolution, the overwhelming majority of the gainfully employed population was engaged outside the industrial sphere. And even in industry the labour force remained dispersed to a considerable extent.

The regional and sectoral unevenness of development of the new productive forces superimposed on historically determined specific national conditions, everywhere evoked substantial differences in the value and price of labour power, and consequently in working men's standard of material wants and way of life. At certain stages, moreover, and in certain industries, a tendency to widen the gap in payment for labour power prevailed over the trend to level it. Some of the working class' trade and industrial subdivisions proved to be temporarily in a privileged position as regards the class as a whole. Sometimes that applied to whole national sections as well (e.g. the British proletariat).

The peculiar intermingling of new and archaic forms of production characteristic of capitalism's early stage of development, which caused a kind of conservation of undertakings of an artisan and manufactory type, in some cases neutralised the organising trend of capitalist production in relation to a significant part of the labour force. Nevertheless, minimum objective conditions promoting elementary organisation of the proletariat arose and became quite developed. In this period, too, there was naturally a relatively rapid spread of proletarian organisations of a primitive type (mutual help funds, trade associations, and so on).

The organising role of capitalism in relation to the working class, however, did not consist solely in the creation of objective conditions. The growth of capitalist relations furthered the process, deepening the antagonism between labour and capital and so impelling workers to resort to organisation as the most effective form of strengthening and defending their positions. The resistance of the working class' attempts to organise, exerted by the bourgeoisie, although it hampered them, could not in the long run prevent this process.

The proletariat's forms of organisation depend on the specific character of its needs and the demands put forward by it in accordance with them. Since these needs were determined initially by the general patterns of the sale of labour power to a definite capitalist, the proletarians' first organisations were called on "to conquer such terms of contract as might raise them at least above the condition of mere slaves".[1] So trade unions developed, which served as the soil on which the powerful trade union movement of today has grown.

Weakness, partly due to the peculiarities of their rise, and partly to the actual level of development of the working class, was characteristic of the working class' initial organisations. Arising on the wreckage of the journeymen's unions, trade unions took over from them only certain forms of a symbolic and ritual character. They also inherited traditions of a guild-craft exclusiveness that hampered proletarians' organisations breaking out of narrowly understood trade limits. Hence the fragmentation of their trade associations, a certain restraint in the demands put forward by them, and comparatively infrequent use of acute forms of pressure on the employers, a subjection to illusions fed by calculations of the possibility of co-operation between labour and capital. "They therefore," as Marx remarked, "kept too much aloof from general and social movements."[2]

Many of these weaknesses, especially those engendered by the working class' low level of development, still remained unovercome at the end of the period under review. Nevertheless, trade unions, at least in several European countries and the United States, had advanced considerably along the road of transformation into the mass organisations of the working class that they became in the industrially most developed capitalist countries by the turn of the century.

As the working class' needs grew and, correspondingly, its consciousness of its real interests, the functions of workers' organisations broadened. In that connection trade unions concentrated their activity on improving the conditions of sale of labour power, and built up various forms of proletarian associations, designed for collective action outside that sphere.

One of these was the co-operative movement. The setting up of co-operative undertakings had a special place in this. Marx deemed it necessary to give a high appreciation of "the value of these great social experiments".[3] "By deed, instead of by argument, they have shown that production on a large scale, and in accord with the

[1] Karl Marx, "Instructions for the Delegates of the Provisional General Council", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 82.

[2] Ibid., p. 83.

[3] Karl Marx, "Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Ibid., p. 16.

behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear fruit, the means of labour need not be monopolised as a means of domination over, and of extortion against, the labouring man himself; and that, like slave labour, like serf labour, hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind, and a joyous heart."[1]

At the same time he drew attention to the limited social character of the co-operative movement, warning against exaggerating its possibilities and attributing it the character of a universal means of emancipating the proletariat. "At the same time, the experience of the period from 1848 to 1864 has proved beyond doubt that, however excellent in principle, and however useful in practice, co-operative labour, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries".[2]

Indeed, hardly had the co-operative movement become appreciably widespread than the bourgeoisie, in the person of its ideologists, began to turn "nauseously complimentary" to the very system of labour that they had vainly tried to nip in the bud deriding it as the Utopia of the dreamer, or stigmatising it as the sacrilege of the Socialist.[3]

Workmen's education societies were also comparatively common and stable; their activity to some extent mitigated the consequences of the extreme forms of intellectual discrimination against the proletariat felt especially painfully by its advanced strata.

These organisations did not, and in fact could not, become really mass bodies, although they were quite popular in certain periods in some countries (England, Germany, Switzerland). Nevertheless, these societies played an appreciable role in the history of the organised development of the working class, helping draw the proletarian vanguard into intellectual affairs and training cadres for the growing movement.

"The proletariat," Engels wrote, "becomes a force the moment it forms an independent workers' party."[4] The world historical gain of the international working-class movement in this period was that not only was a revolutionary proletarian theory, Marxism, scientific

---

[1] Karl Marx, "Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association", Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 16.

[2] Ibid., p. 17.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Friedrich Engels, "Die preussische Militarfrage und die deutsche Arbeiterpartei", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 16, S. 68-69.

communism developed but also the fundamental principles of a revolutionary proletarian party, the ideologist and leader of the working class. The founding of such parties and their constantly increasing role as a powerful factor in the whole development of the movement became distinguishing features of the succeeding periods of its history. And with the rise of Lenin's party of a new type, which marked the biggest step in principle in the development of Marx and Engels' ideas about workers' parties, a force appeared that has enormously determined the whole course of the twentieth century's history.

The development of the first workers' parties was a necessary response to the need for real political activity objectively arising in the proletariat as a concentrated mode of defending its most general, long-term interests. In scale of organisation, ideological cohesion, mass character, and political impact on society these organisations were only the initial stage on the long road that had to be followed in order to transform them into the vanguard revolutionary Marxist-Leninist parties united in the international communist movement. Nevertheless, Marx and Engels had already then, in the course of their forming and establishment, laid down certain principles that were subsequently accepted by Bolshevism, and later still by the international communist movement.

* * *

The development of the forms and methods of class struggle, the broadening and sharpening of its character, and the higher organisation of the working class have affected the conditions of its existence. The data of the period under review convincingly confirm Marxist science's very important conclusion that an integral component of the value and price of labour power is the historically established standard of needs accepted by the society concerned at a given time. This standard in turn is the resultant of the action of several factors, among which the real capacity of the exploited class to defend and strengthen its positions plays a most important role. A raising or lowering of the price of labour power compared with its value depends, moreover, on a whole set of circumstances, in which the determinant one is the proletariat's objective strength, militancy, and readiness to go into action.

A feature of the period under review was that the working class' level of development, degree of organisation, and scale of struggle had not yet reached the point at which they could be appreciably reflected in a general change in the value and price of labour power. Only separate trade groups succeeded sometimes, through stubborn struggle and in favourable market situation and political circum-

stances (for example, in conditions of a revolutionary upsurge and weakening of the positions of both the state authorities and the bourgeoisie), in winning a certain increase in the price of labour power. Gains in this field, however, usually proved temporary; at the very first opportunity they were cancelled out in some way or another.

Even in circumstances of very sharp competition the bourgeoisie did not manifest the least readiness to concede an iota of their acquired wealth. In spite of "the augmentation of wealth and power entirely confined to classes of property" (Marx), and the unheard-of expansion of industry that had taken place since 1848 in both England and all the industrial countries of the Continent, real wages had advanced somewhat for only a minority of the working class; in most cases the monetary rise in wages for the majority was purely nominal. Marx said in that connection: "Everywhere the great mass of the working classes were sinking down to a lower depth, at the same rate, at least, that those above them were rising in the social scale. In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only denied by those, whose interest it is to hedge other people in a fool's paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, nor all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses; but that, on the present false base, every fresh development of the productive powers of labour must tend to deepen social contrasts and point social antagonisms."[1]

Nevertheless, in spite of all the difficulties and the serious defeats suffered by the working class as a result of the failure of Chartism in England and of the revolutions of 1848 on the Continent, its struggle brought it definite results in the long run, with prospects of much more significant gains in the following periods. One of these gains, the greatest for that time, was the introduction of the first forms of factory legislation. After the thirty years' struggle that the English workers had fought with most admirable perseverance, they had succeeded in carrying the Ten Hours' Bill. Subsequently the majority of European governments were forced to pass similar laws, with more or less significant amendments. Later, under the impact of the working-class struggle, the sphere of these laws was constantly extended.

In spite of all its limitations and constant breaches in practice, the factory legislation brought "immense physical, moral, and intellectual benefits" to industrial workers (Marx). In addition to its

[1] Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 14-15.

practical consequences, however, the passing of this legislation had great significance for the proletariat's subsequent struggle. Through their men of science the bourgeoisie had predicted and kept reiterating that any legal restriction of the hours of labour must sound the death knell of industry. Its fierce resistance to any forms of social regulation of the purchase and sale of labour power was not only due to greed for profit but was also because it told on "the great contest between the blind rule of the supply and demand law which forms the political economy of the middle class, and social production controlled by social foresight, which forms the political economy of the working class".[1]

Another very important result of the period under review was substantial progress in moulding the class consciousness of the proletariat.

The raising of the proletariat's class consciousness was inseparably associated with the whole historical development of society. The specific patterns of the movement of consciousness itself, the interaction of the consciousness of different social groups, and the influence of national and social experience were of great importance. Because of the interweaving of these factors the moulding of the proletariat's class consciousness was an uneven process even when it occurred in approximately identical material conditions of existence. Sometimes it ran ahead of these conditions, sometimes lagged behind them, sometimes took on a mystified, distorted form.

Typically proletarian forms of consciousness were characteristic only of a small part of the working class right to the end of our period. The workers of that time, in the majority, especially in countries where the industrial revolution had not yet entered the culminating stage of its development, were not distinctly differentiated from the predominantly petty-bourgeois masses from which they had recently come.

The determinant catalysts of growth of the proletariat's class consciousness, as a rule, were the course and outcome of the class struggle. Conditions of material existence engendered social dissatisfaction, which laid the basis for spontaneous protest, which in itself, as Lenin said, signified "consciousness in an *embryonic form*. Even the primitive revolts," Lenin went on, "expressed the awakening of consciousness to a certain extent. The workers were losing their age-long faith in the permanence of the system which oppressed them and began ... I shall not say to understand, but to sense the necessity for collective resistance, definitely abandoning their slavish submission to the authorities."[2]

---

[1] Ibid., p. 16.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 374-75.

Subsequent moulding of proletarian consciousness was governed by the development of the first elements of organised class struggle, which found expression in more or less systematic strikes that involved the formulation of concrete demands, tactical measures, and so on. That stage of the struggle marked the bringing to light of the antagonism between workers and bosses. There was still, however, no awareness of the irreconcilable opposition of the working class as such to the whole capitalist system. The next stage in the moulding of class consciousness was governed by the rise and spread of a scientific socialist theory among the workers.

Socialism is introduced by ideologists into the proletariat's class struggle spontaneously developing on the soil of capitalist relations. The "ideologist," Lenin said, "*precedes* the spontaneous movement, points out the road, and is able ahead of all others to solve all the theoretical, political, tactical, and organisational questions which the 'material elements' of the movement spontaneously encounter. In order truly to give 'consideration to the material elements of the movement', one must view them critically, one must be able to point out the dangers and defects of spontaneity and *to elevate* it to the level of consciousness."[1]

The danger of underestimating the role of theory and of the significance of the revolutionary intelligentsia ("ideologists"), Lenin warned, is not simply an inevitable slowing down of the moulding and development of proletarian consciousness, but also the possibility of this consciousness being deformed by the impact of external ideological and political influences.

To state the leading role of "ideologists" from among the revolutionary intelligentsia in developing the proletariat's class consciousness does not, of course, mean to exclude workers from this process. "They take part, however, not as workers, but as socialist theoreticians, as Proudhons and Weitlings; in other words, they take part only when they are able, and to the extent that they are able, more or less, to acquire the knowledge of their age and develop that knowledge. But in order that working men *may succeed in this more often*, every effort must be made to raise the level of the consciousness of the workers in general."[2]

By the end of the period under review the different sections of the working class were at different stages of the moulding of a proletarian consciousness. The bulk of them had reached a level that could be classed, in accordance with Lenin's typology, as that of "social dissatisfaction" (or "spontaneous protest"). In the countries capita-

[1] V. I. Lenin, "A Talk with Defenders of Economism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 316.

[2] V. I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", op. cit., p. 384.

listically most developed, advanced groups of workers had risen above that level.

Scientific socialism was the continuation and culmination of centuries of human culture. It had drawn on all the achievements of philosophy, political economy, and the natural sciences. At the same time its rise marked a qualitative leap, new in principle, in the development of social thinking. Marxism put a most important instrument for comprehending reality into the hands of the working class. It brought out the patterns of social progress, demonstrated the historically transient character of the capitalist formation, and disclosed the working class as the leading, determining force of the revolutionary overthrow of the last exploiter system. Marxism formulated the objectively determined social ideals of mankind's future and blazed the path for advancing toward them.

All previously existing socio-philosophical concepts of social transformations lost their erstwhile scientific and political meaning with the rise of Marxism, including the progressively biased systems of the great classics of utopian socialism and of communist Utopians.

Marxism, while allotting social utopianism its real place as one of the stages in the development of social thought, deprived it of the role of ideology of the proletariat, which was inwardly alien to it. Consequently, utopian socialism, while retaining its influence in separate sections of the working class, became more and more the ideology of intermediate social groups of the working population who were victims of economic and social oppression under capitalism, but who at the same time were not a stable part of the working class either in the socio-economic or ideological or political sense. Utopian socialism retained that function to some extent in succeeding stages, right down to the present time.

By the end of the period under review Marxism had already taken shape as a balanced, all-round scientific and philosophical system. The basic principles of dialectical and historical materialism had been formulated by it, an economic and social analysis of capitalism unsurpassed in depth and force had been made which brought out its historical doom, a doctrine of the historical mission of the working class had been developed, and the principal ways and means of carrying out that mission had been plotted. The writings of Marx and Engels had scientifically substantiated the theory of proletarian revolution, posed and resolved the problem of political power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the role of the vanguard revolutionary political party, of the international character of the proletariat, and of the significance of its solidarity as a weapon for its own emancipation and deliverance of all working people from the chains and shackles of capitalist oppression.

As a qualitatively new, global scientific theory Marxism was not

and could not be comprehended in its entirety by its contemporaries, including the then advanced part of the proletarian movement. Parallel with the formation of Marxist ideology there was a complicated, contradictory process of its inculcation and assimilation, which took many years. Pre-scientific ideological conceptions usually did not disappear all at once, and the process often acquired painful forms. It was accompanied with an ideological struggle in the course of which incidental petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers of the revolutionary working-class movement dropped out, and so did leaders who had not been able to rise to the higher level of socialist theory, and so to realise the genuine political objectives of the proletarian movement. During a certain stage the apprehending of Marxist ideas by individual members of the proletarian vanguard was combined in a way with a retention of rudiments of Proudhonist views (in France), of trades unionist ones (in England), and with primitive communist, quasirevolutionary ones (in Germany).

In some cases Marxist theory was apprehended in a one-sided way and oversimplified (not as a science but as a creed), which was fraught with a danger of emasculating the creative character of this supreme achievement of human thought, and of substituting a dogmatic interpretation of texts for it. Similar tendencies also arose during the spread of Marxism in breadth, with the result that only individual aspects of the new proletarian teaching, rather than its content, were mastered. The less prepared the medium was, both socially and ideologically, the stronger was this confusion. That line of reinterpreting and adapting a false concept of Marxism can be traced right down to the present. In our day it is most distinctly manifested in Maoism—a system of views in which outward, formal, verbal recognition of Marxism-Leninism goes hand in hand, in fact, with an emasculation and distortion of its scientific, revolutionary content.

The ideological struggle was exceptionally acute where theoretical and philosophical views opposed to Marxism reflected the profound strivings and interests of social groups alien or directly hostile to the proletariat. An ideology of nationalism, representing a form of the bourgeoisie's ideological influence, confronted the international essence of Marxist teaching in the labour movement of a number of countries in Europe. Until the tasks of national emancipation and national integration were resolved nationalism did not lose its democratic content, and its bearers acted as objective allies of the proletariat on a number of issues. By the end of the period, however, when national consolidation had been completed in the main in Western Europe (Italy and Germany), the theory and practice of nationalism (Mazzinianism, and in part Lassalleanism, etc.) began to loom as a serious opponent of the revolutionary proletarian ideology. Nationalism then retained its relatively democratic content as

regards Europe only in separate areas of Central, Eastern, and South-East Europe, where national questions had not been finally solved. Nevertheless, nationalism, constantly fed by the sharpening of national contradictions born of capitalism, penetrated the labour movement by various channels, and had a harmful influence on the proletarian class struggle in a number of countries.

The bourgeoisie's ideological influence also showed itself in the preservation and even relative consolidation of the influence of ideological concepts aimed at reducing the sphere of the class struggle to a fight for partial improvements in the conditions of sale of labour power. These ideas reflected, with a certain distortion, the real moods of a considerable part of the workers up to a certain point in the development of the working class. But hardly had objective opportunities matured in practice (and been comprehended in theory) for the proletariat to pass to active political struggle and pose the issue of taking power than the social role of concepts with the obvious purpose of limiting confrontation with the bourgeoisie to a fight over the conditions of buying and selling labour power essentially altered. These concepts were not simply an ideological expression of the fact that individual sections of the working class were lagging behind socially and intellectually, not just the theoretical reflection of a past stage. Irrespective of the subjective intentions of their devotees, they turned into views alien to the proletariat's real interests. By holding the proletariat back from attacking on the most promising battleground, these concepts began to serve as a means of preserving and consolidating the foundations of the capitalist system.

The class content of theoretical systems calculated to contract the sphere of the proletariat's class struggle began to tell especially clearly when a system of views took shape everywhere whose variants subsequently became notorious as opportunism and reformism, and later still, as revisionism. Underlying the spread and comparative stability displayed by these ideas, which had a serious effect on the subsequent fate of the movement, were certain new phenomena of social reality in addition to those noted above.

The most important new phenomena were associated with the objectively caused differentiation in the value of labour power and with the continuing (and sometimes even increasing) difference in the development of the working class, and, consequently, in the conditions of existence (on both a national and an international scale). In countries where the industrial revolution had gone further, giving rise to organised sections of the proletariat associated with the most modern spheres of production, certain economic and social concessions could be wrested from the bourgeoisie in a number of cases.

These concessions could not compare in scale and significance with the scope of the militant working class' gains in the second half of the twentieth century. But against the background of the general poverty in which the working population lived then, living conditions even a little above the ordinary standard of living of the bulk of wage labourers seemed high. They were especially "impressive" compared with the way of life of the proletarian masses in countries where the industrial revolution was retarded.

When more favourable working and living conditions remained the fortune of only a tiny part of the working class, its economic and social gains had their negative as well as their positive aspects. They evoked a feeling of "exclusiveness". The striving to maintain the standard of living attained often gave rise to a tendency to isolation and separation from the bulk of the proletariat, and sometimes even to a direct counterposing of interests. As regards organisation, this tendency found expression in a kind of revival of craft views, and in attempts to perpetuate trade unions as organisations exclusively uniting skilled workers, and to protect the trade union movement from an influx of masses of unskilled workers.

From the middle of the nineteenth century, the bourgeoisie began to exert more and more pressure on this trend of development among individual strata of the working class, having passed from a strategy of suppressing them to one of combining suppression with social manoeuvring, i.e. with attempts to split the working class by means of economic concessions to a small fraction, and to weaken its anti-capitalist aspirations by dealing (usually belatedly) with the most acute problems of a bourgeois-democratic character. The main trend of these efforts was governed by a desire to turn the proletariat into a "stabilising" force of exploiter society. The method of carrying out these reforms was, by granting tolerable living conditions to a certain part of the working class, to counterpose it to the rest of the proletarian masses, split the proletariat, and so weaken its fighting strength substantially.

The combination of the objective processes taking place in the working class with the consequences of social reformism from above in the interests of the ruling classes led to the emergence of a special sub-stratum in the proletariat, the labour aristocracy. This sub-stratum was not the same in the different countries. The privileges it enjoyed, economically and socially, varied considerably. Historically the situation of this group of workers remained extremely unstable because it depended not only on the will of those who were banking on the labour aristocracy but also on the real state of capitalist production, the size of the reserves that could be drawn on to sweeten the upper strata of the workers, the state of the labour market, the demand for labour, and the scale of the struggle of the other sections

of the working class for their economic, social, and political interests. Nevertheless, this social group played, within certain limits, the ideological and political role assigned it by the initiators of social manoeuvre. The labour aristocracy formed a sub-stratum that not only proved especially receptive to the theory and practice of opportunism, reformism, and revisionism, but also acted for a long time as their active disseminator.

A specific group that Engels called "the artificial proletariat", dependent on the government, played a similar role.[1] Unlike the labour aristocracy it consisted of extremely unskilled workers, and was recruited in the main from among the lumpen-proletariat. It was "directly *bribed*", in Engels' estimate, by being employed on public works so as, thereby, to weaken the tensions in society and also to broaden the regime's "mass basis" by comparatively small outlays.[2]

The ideological influence of the ruling classes was also manifested in the form of direct apologetics for bourgeois, and sometimes pre-bourgeois, economic, social, and political relations. They affected most intensively those elements of the proletariat that were least advanced in integrating as a special social group, above all the agricultural proletariat. The agricultural labourers were "that part of the working class that understands its own interest and its own social position with the most difficulty and later than the others".[3] A result of this influence on these elements was their demonstrative abstention from any form of proletarian organisation and from involvement in the class struggle even at its economic level, and their later partial affiliation with conservative social and political movements. In view of the constant influx to the working class of people coming from other, mainly petty-bourgeois, semi-proletarian, and lumpen-proletarian social strata, the conditions for maintenance of this influence continued to exist for years and years, and even decades.

The intermediate sub-strata also exerted an ideological pressure of another kind on the proletariat. The social impatience, inconsistency, vague aspirations, unorganised character, individualism, and social instability typical of these groups of the population, were all reflected in theoretical systems that ignored the significance of the objective conditions for radical social transformations, i.e. the degree of maturity of the productive forces, the level of development, organisation, and ideological training of the class that had to carry these transformations out, and the role of concrete historical situa-

[1] Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 16, S. 71.
[2] Ibid., S. 72.
[3] Ibid., S. 74.

tions (degree of degradation of the old ruling class, the distribution of political forces).

From the very beginning Blanquism erred largely in this direction, although individual spokesmen, being subjectively sincere and close to proletarian revolutionaries, got rid of much of the extremeness of their views in the course of practical activity, and subsequently came close to Marxists and even came over to their position. The features of the theoretical systems summarised above came out in their most extremist and militant form in the views of August Willich and Karl Schapper.

At the end of the period studied the system of views characteristic of petty-bourgeois, semi-proletarian, and lumpen-proletarian substrata found theoretical shaping in Bakuninism, which was one of the original variants of the anarchistic theories that subsequently became common in the proletarian environment of individual, less capitalistically developed countries.

A specific feature of the working class as a social force destined to perform a historical mission, is that in fighting for its own emancipation it thereby fights for the emancipation of all mankind. That is expressed not only in the objective consequences of its practical activity, but also in the very aims and objectives of social development. In other words, in trying to settle issues corresponding to the aspirations and interests of other social groups of the working population, the proletariat is not pursuing tactical aims linked with the need to draw allies to its side, but is expressing its own social and historical mission.

That is why the proletariat was already taking part in the struggle for social progress in the first stages of its development, at first spontaneously and later more and more consciously. This was displayed in the exceptionally active role that workers played in democratic actions and revolutions. It was also confirmed by the popularity among the most enlightened sections of the working class of utopian socialist and communist theories, not yet addressed to the proletariat, or only partially so, but which then reflected the perennial universal dream of an improved, harmonious, just social order. This historically determined feature of the working class found its fullest embodiment in Marxism, which, being the highest form of expression of proletarian class interests and aspirations, has an immense universal content.

From its very beginning Marxism clearly posed and solved a number of very important matters on the general democratic plane. One of them, which acquired exceptional importance in subsequent stages of evolution of the international working-class movement, was the relation between the purely proletarian struggle and the fight for national emancipation. The deep causal connection between

the objectives of the social emancipation of the proletariat as a class and the national self-determination of peoples was disclosed in the examples of the unification movement in Germany and Italy, and of the emancipation struggle in Ireland and Poland. A people that oppresses other peoples cannot itself be free; likewise an oppressed class that itself tolerates the oppression of others cannot emancipate itself.

The issue of the proletariat's role as the principal social factor in the transformation of international relations in the universal interests of mankind was also posed then for the first time. The integral link between the workers' class interests and the character of their influence on world politics had already been formulated by Marx in the "Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association."[1]

The working class came up against this task in practice at the end of the period under review, when the biggest European war of the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Franco-Prussian War, faced the proletarians of the belligerent and non-belligerent countries in earnest with the need to define their attitude to this foreign-policy conflict and "*the policy of conquest*",[2] and to work out an action programme that would meet both their class interests and the interests of peace and progress in Europe. The stand taken then by the vanguard sections of the proletariat on the main issues of principle, was a practical embodiment of the objective identity, theoretically established by Marxism, of the workers' class interests and the highest ideals of humanism. It provided the grounds for the optimistic forecast given in these words, written by Marx in 1870: "While official France and Germany are rushing into a fratricidal feud, the workmen of France and Germany send each other messages of peace and goodwill; this great fact, unparalleled in the history of the past, opens the vista of a brighter future. It proves that in contrast to old society, with its economical miseries and its political delirium, a new society is springing up, whose International rule will be *Peace*, because its national ruler will be everywhere the same—*Labour*!"[3]

At that stage, of course, it could only be a matter of hope. It needed many decades of stubborn struggle by the proletariat, and its conquest of power first in Russia, and later in a number of other countries, and a change in the balance of power on the world stage in favour of socialism, for a change to occur in international relations

[1] See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 18.

[2] *The General Council of the First International, 1870-1871*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 337.

[3] Ibid., p. 328.

that marks a decisive improvement of the entire world situation. But the main line of development, and its significance in principle, were already mapped out with supreme insight in those years.

* * *

Against the background of the immense road covered by the working class and working-class movement by the last third of the twentieth century, their historical development, that culminated at a point now more than a century behind us, appears as the initial stage of the struggle for a future great achievement. But at that stage the main features of the historical mission of the proletariat were already distinctly visible, as were the possibilities, prospects, and difficulties that awaited it in the future. In that sense the past, properly assimilated and evaluated, is very real. It exists not only in historians' writings but also in the important theoretical and political conclusions to which the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the international working-class and communist movement have now come in their fundamental documents.

A

Abraham—43
Adams, J.—109
Adams, S.—108
Affre —439
Aguet, J.-P.—143, 201
Agulhon, M.—262
Ahrends, H.—305
Akatova, T. N.—168, 190
Alba — 104
Albert — 413
Aldovarandi, P.—551
Alpatov, M. A.—258
Andrushchenko, A. I.—100
Anneke, F.—455
Annenkov, P. V.—359
Anton, G. K.—183
Antonova, K. A.—169
Applegarth, R.—549
Aptheker, H.—109, 110, 624
Armand, F.—268
Armengaud, A.—126, 151
Armytage, W. H. G.—622
Aron, R.—629
Ashton, T. S.—83
Aspinall, A.—200
Averbukh, R. A.—480, 484, 491
Ayçoberry, P.—146

B

Babeuf, G.—113, 242, 243, 292, 330, 336, 338, 340
Bach, I. A.—554
Bäckström, K.—155, 156, 204
Bagaturiya, G. A.—288
Bakunin —539, 573, 577, 578, 591, 594-596, 612
Bălcescu, N.—279
Barbès, A.—301, 302, 425, 438
Barmby, J. G.—267
Barg, M. A.—85, 107, 623
Bartenev — 577
Barteneva —577
Bastiat, F.—623
Bate, G.—106
Bauer, H.—305, 307, 308, 385, 386
Bazard, S.-A.—261, 262
Bebel, A.—559, 566, 580, 588, 590, 597, 602, 608, 610, 635
Becker, G.—473
Becker, I. P.—532, 559, 561, 563, 571, 575, 579, 588, 603, 605
Becker, W.—146
Bédarida, F.—121
Bedeau — 437
Beesly, E. S.—548, 552, 553
Bell —629
Bendix, R.—139
Bendrikova, L. A.—434, 484
Berend, I. T.—158
Bernard, M.—301, 302
Bernhardt, B.—305
Bernstein, B. J.—108
Bernstein, E.—622, 623, 631, 632, 635
Bibal —550
Bimba, A.—89, 624
Biskamp —531
Bismarck —534, 563, 601, 604, 608, 609
Blanc, L.—391, 412-414, 416, 417, 419-421, 424, 425, 427, 431, 432, 438, 443, 449, 451
Blanket, Th.—43
Blanqui, A.—291, 299, 301, 302, 304, 334-340, 379, 411, 412, 418, 420-423, 425, 438, 599
Blaug, M.—141

Blondel, G.—176
Blum, A.—429
Bobczynski, K.—551
Bocquet, J.-B.—552
Bogdanov—633
Boisguillebert, P.—82, 86, 87
Bolkhovitinov, N. N.—148, 149, 152
Bonaparte, P.—600
Borkheim, S.—574, 575
Born, S.—471-474
Boucher, J.—84, 86
Boulton—180
Bouvier-Ajam, M.—143, 176, 220
Bowden, W.—226, 227
Brandenburg—476
Brandt, W.—635
Braunthal, J.—622
Bray, J. F.—253, 255
Bréa—438, 441
Brentano—630
Brezhnev, L. I.—15, 30, 36
Brisbane, A.—280
Bron, J.—144, 196
Bruhat, J.—145, 186, 195, 211
Buchet—290
Bulavin, K.—97, 98
Buonarroti, Ph.—243, 299
Bürgers, H.—465
Burnham, J.—260
Butashevich-Petrashevsky, N.V.—273, 274
Byron, G.—195
Bythell, D.—179, 226

C

Cabet, E.—287, 304, 306, 329-333, 336, 338, 340, 341, 344, 346, 412, 420, 422, 423, 426, 443
Camelina, Z.—570
Cameron, A. C.—565
Campanella, T.—240
Campbell, John—317, 349
Camphausen, L.—459, 460, 462
Carrothers, W. A.—153
Catcher—272
Caussidière—425, 438, 449
Cavaignac —436, 438-440, 449, 450
Chagin, B. A.—632
Charles I—330
Charles X—291
Cherepnin, L. V.—97, 98, 100
Chernov —633
Chernyak, E. B.—179, 193, 211, 215, 216
Chernyshevsky, N. G.—274-279, 573, 574, 576-578
Chistozvonov, A. N.—104
Chlepner, B. S.—153, 202
Cobbett, W.—52, 185, 246, 351
Cockburn—318
Cockerill, J.—153
Colbert —58, 74
Colding —364
Cole, G. D. H.—233, 236, 237, 260, 622
Colin —419
Combe, A.—253
Commager, H. S.—621
Commerford, J.—279
Comte, A.—548, 624
Considerant, V.—269-271, 440
Constant —290
Conze, W.—146, 471, 622
Cooper, Th.—318
Coornaert, E.—219, 220
Copeland, M. Th.—139, 150
Cournet, F.—556
Cremer —546, 549, 552, 556, 592
Croce, B.—621
Cromwell —330
Crouzet, F.—184, 198

D

Dabrowski, J.—551
Dahrendorf, R.—624
D'Alembert —257
Dalin, V. M.—113, 242
Damesme —437, 438
Danhof, C. H.—150
Daniels, R.—465
Danielson, N. F.—575
Danton —342
Darwin —364
Dautry, J.—435, 441
David, M.—183
Davison, S.—149, 150
Deflotte, P.-L.—412, 428
Dehove, G.—137, 183, 201, 211, 231
Dell, E.—106
Dembowski, E.—279
Demikhovsky, M. V.—149
De Paepe, César —559, 562, 572, 590
Dereure, L.- S.—599
D'Ester —465
Dézamy, T.—284, 304, 332-334, 336, 338, 340, 341, 344, 412
Diehl, K.—621
Dierig —308, 310
Disraeli —593

Dmitriyeva, E. L.—278, 577
Dobrolyubov —574
Doherty, J.—237
Dolléans, E.—137, 183, 201, 211, 231
Dommanget, M.—112, 337
Dowe, D.—196
Doyle, Ch.—318
Drake, M.—156
Drevet —419, 422
Dronke, E.—465
Droz, J.—146
Dühring —256
Dupin, M.—429, 431
Dupleix, F.—571
Dupont, E.—556, 559, 564, 583, 593, 598, 606
Duvivier —437, 439

E

Eccarius, J. G.—551-554, 556, 559, 560, 564, 585, 603, 606
Eden, F. M.—226
Eglinton, J.—550
Eichhoff, W.—590
Enfantin, B.-P.—261
Engels, F.—9, 11, 13, 14, 28, 30, 31, 65, 72, 94, 101, 103, 106, 117-119, 121, 125, 138, 140, 145, 175, 179, 181, 182, 184, 190, 191, 198-200, 208, 210, 212, 214, 215, 218, 220, 222, 227, 228, 234, 235, 241, 244, 246, 252, 255, 256, 262, 264, 270, 279, 282, 284, 285, 288, 301, 302, 306, 308, 311, 312, 315, 321, 322, 345, 346, 352-355, 357-359, 363-366, 368-405, 439, 463-475, 478, 484, 485, 490, 494-496, 498-503, 505-514, 519, 531-535, 540, 551, 556-559, 567, 568, 574-576, 580, 596, 601-604, 610-617, 619, 623-630, 632-638, 648-650, 654, 655, 663
Evans, G.—279, 326, 327
Ewerbeck, H.—343, 386

F

Facey, Th.—549
Falk —631
Faucher —630
Fedoseev, P. N.—632
Felix, D.—81
Ferdinand I —480, 481, 491
Ferdinand II —491
Feuerbach —364, 371
Fichte —365
Fischer, W.—146, 179
Flaubert, G.—441, 442
Flerovsky, N. (Bervi, V. V.) —575, 576, 578
Flotte, B.—420
Fohlen, C.—121, 126, 178
Foner, Ph. S.—83, 86, 91, 108, 111, 186, 202, 211, 212, 231, 237, 324, 326, 328, 624
Fontaine, L.—572
Fontana, G.—551
Foster, W. Z.—110, 328
Fourier, F. M. Ch.—263-269, 271, 273-275, 281, 282, 284-286, 288, 338, 346, 347, 364, 365
Fribourg, E. E.—545, 570, 605
Friedrich-Wilhelm IV—455, 457, 458, 476, 478-480
Frost, J.—303

G

Gaismair, M.—102
Gans, H. J.—625
Garibaldi —539
Garnier-Pagès —414, 436
Garrido —539
Gentin —195
George III—198
Gibbon —246
Gille, B.—143
Gladstone —527, 611
Godwin, W.—244, 245
Godechot, J.—253
Golman, L. I.—533
Gonzales, A.—154
Goodrich, C.—149, 150
Gorchakov, P. D.—84
Gorlovsky, M. A.—206
Gossez, R.—409, 412, 420, 430
Gottschalk —455, 465, 467
Gray, J.—253
Greeley, H.—280
Greene, J. P.—621
Greenleaf, W.—69, 109
Greulich, H.—561
Grigoryeva, J. V.—155
Grousset, P.—599
Grove —364
Grün, K.—387, 389
Gruner, E.—139, 153, 196
Guibert —409
Guillaume —539, 606
Guillaume, P.—202
Guizot, F.—269, 364, 408, 424

H

Habsburgs —407, 484
Hacker, L. M.—124, 125, 149, 150
Hales, J.—556
Hall, Ch.—243
Hammond, B.—196, 622
Hammond, J. L.—196, 622
Hardach, G. H.—124, 144, 178, 211, 223
Hardy, Th.—215
Harney, G. J.—314, 318, 322, 354, 355, 492, 493, 495
Harrington —626, 627
Harris, J. R.—142
Harrison, F.—548
Harrison, J. F. C.—253, 288
Hartwell, R.—549, 552, 580
Hartwell, R. M.—183
Hayek, F. A.—54, 59, 622
Hegel —364, 365, 367
Heinzen, K.—379
Heligon, J.-P.— 545
Helmholtz —364
Hepner, A.—580
Herzen, A. I.—271-275, 277, 441
Hetherington, H.—253
Hilbey, C.—427, 443
Hill, Ch.—105, 106
Hobsbawm, E. J.—28, 183, 184, 196, 217, 218, 222, 223, 226, 246, 247, 543
Hodgskin, Th.—253
Hooke —629
Hopkins, Sh. V.—82
Howe, I.—625
Howell, G.—552
Huber —424
Hutt, A.—234, 235

I

Ioannisyan, A. P.—241
Itenberg, B. S.—574, 577
Ivanov, L. M.—160
Ivanova, O. E.—73

J

Jackson, A.—326, 327
Jelačic —484, 486
Jensen, M.—108
Jones, E.—322, 492, 493, 495, 532
Jones, W.—318
Joule —364
Jung, H.—556, 559

K

Kaczerowsky, Klaus — 101
Kan, S. B.—309, 310, 452
Kandel, E. P.—390, 466, 472
Kane, M.—150
Kankrin, E. F.—84
Kant —364, 365
Karatayev, N. K.—577
Karlbom, R.—204
Kaub, K.—551
Kerr, C.—625
Kersaussie, I. de —299, 300
Keshelava, V. V.—632
Kropotkin, P. A.—569
Kharkova, A. M.—51
Khashimov, I.—169, 171
King, G.—47
Kinyapina, N. S.—183, 187
Klein, C.—505, 571
Klima, A.—157
Klings, K.—571
Koenen, Ph.—579
Kondrashenkov, A. A.—99, 100
Korvin-Krukovskaya, A. V.—278, 577
Kosarev, B. M.—147
Koval, B. I.—172, 173, 208
Kowalska, S.—159
Kowalski, W.—305
Kozmin, B. P.—577, 578
Kriege, H.—279, 385, 387
Kuczynski, J.—138, 139, 152
Kugelmann, L.—586
Kula, W.—71, 158, 159
Kundel, E.—580
Kunina, V. E.—332, 554, 565

L

Labriola, A.—632, 633
La Bruyère, J.—50
Lacollonge —437
Lafargue, P.—576, 583, 598, 599
Lagardelle, H.—632
Lagrange —425
Lama, D.—551, 552
Lamartine, A. de —411, 451
Lamennais, F. R. de —268, 290
Lamoricière —436, 437
Lassalle, F.—567, 568, 573, 635
Latour —485
Laurat, L.—629
Lavalle —630
Lavoye —419
Lavrov, P. L.—278
Leach, James —317, 349

Leach, John —318
Lebreton —438
Le Chapellier —114, 116, 231, 545, 563
Lederer, H.—622
Ledru-Rollin, A.—304, 449, 451
Lefebvre, G.—112, 624
Lefort, H.—552
Lefranc, G.—185
Le Lubez, P. V.—551, 552
Lemisch, J.—108
Lenin, V. I.—9-11, 15, 17, 18, 20-23, 26-30, 35, 45, 55-57, 64, 65, 67, 70, 72, 75, 77, 92, 111, 122, 137, 147, 161, 162, 164, 188, 191, 197, 210, 214, 219, 272-276, 278, 282-284, 290, 315, 335, 351, 363, 366, 369, 373, 375, 401, 450, 451, 465, 466, 472, 495, 496, 504, 515, 535, 538, 561, 586, 597, 602, 615, 633, 634, 636, 637, 642, 648, 649, 657, 658
Leno, J. B.—552, 581
Lepkowski, T.—160
Leroux, P.—261, 287, 425, 438
Lessner, F.—385, 551, 556, 559
Levasseur, E.—142
Levin, G. R.—106
Leviova, S. Z.—464
Levkovsky, A. I.—169
Lévy-Leboyer, M.—143
Lichtheim —287, 630
Liebknecht, W.—531, 532, 559, 568, 571, 580, 588, 590, 602, 606, 608, 610
Limousin, Ch.—545, 552, 570
Linguet, N.—240, 260
Linney, J.—318
Lipson, E.—59, 72, 85
Litavrina, E. E.—51
Lochner, G.—551, 556, 559, 560
Lohmar, U.—631
Lopatin, G. A.—279, 556, 611
Louis-Philippe —269, 299, 305, 411
Lovett, W.—443
Lucraft, B.—552
Ludd, N.—194
Lunin, M.—271
Luther, S.—324
Lyubavin, N. N.—573
Lyublinskaya, A. D.—73

M

Mablie —258
Macaulay, T.—353
MacDonnel, J. P.—556
Maitron, J.—429
Malakhovsky, K. V.—208
Mallarmet —422
Manacorda, G.—554
Mandrou, R.—82
Manin, D.—490, 491
Maning, H.—75
Mansell —60
Manuel, F. E.—195
Marat, J.-P.—113, 336, 427, 443
Marche —411
Marie —415, 435
Marrast —441, 448, 451
Marti, E.—196
Marvaud, A.—567
Marx, K.—9-11, 13, 14, 27, 30, 31, 41-44, 46, 50, 52, 53, 55, 56, 65-68, 70, 72, 73, 77, 79, 85, 86, 90, 92-95, 117-119, 121-123, 125, 127, 137, 138, 140, 145, 155, 167, 175, 179-181, 190, 197-200, 208, 212, 215, 218, 220, 222, 227, 234, 235, 241, 245, 246, 259, 262, 270, 276, 279, 282-284, 286, 288, 298, 299, 302, 308, 311, 312, 328, 332, 334, 336, 339, 340, 343, 346, 357-359, 363-405, 442, 448, 450, 463-475, 479, 484, 486, 487, 490, 494-496, 498-535, 538, 540, 541, 543, 551, 553-560, 563, 564, 567, 568, 570, 572, 574-577, 580, 582, 585-587, 589-593, 595-597, 601-607, 609-617, 623-630, 632-638, 640, 641, 643, 648-650, 653, 655, 656
Martynov, M. N.—97, 99
Mason, J.—318
Matis, H.—156
Mathiez, A.—115, 624
Mäurer, A.—305
Mayer—364
Mazzini —537, 539, 551
Ménard, L.—441
Mesay, J.—579
Meshcheryakova, N. M.—59
Mesliere, J.—240, 241, 281
Metternich —456, 457, 480-482, 490
Metzner, Th.—572
Meyer, S.—572, 573
Mignet —364
Mikhailov, M. I.—390
Mill, J. S.—548, 576
Millière, J.-B.—599
Milyutin, V. A.—274
Mogg —318
Molé —408

Moldavskaya, M. A.—79
Molinari, J.—622
Moll, J.—306-308, 385, 386, 467, 551
Molok, A. I.—406, 435, 439
Montchrétian, A.—73, 74
Moore, B.—628, 629
Mora, F.—562
More, Th.—50, 239, 240, 243
Morelly—240, 242, 262
Morgan, L. H.—364
Morogues, B. de —176
Morris, R. B.—53, 55, 69, 108-110
Morton, A. I.—198, 200, 215, 237, 246, 249, 255, 311, 312
Mudie, G.—253
Muller, H.—288
Münzer, Th.—101-103, 106, 241
Murat, A.-P.—545, 550
Murdock, W.—180
Murray, Ch.—549
Myška, M.—157

N

Napoleon I —265, 330, 449
Napoleon III (Louis Napoleon Bonaparte) —425, 438, 449, 600, 604, 606, 608, 609
Necochea, H. R.—171, 208
Négrier —439
Nekrasov, G. A.—96
Nicholas I —206
Nietsche —620
Noir, V.—600
Nourry —441
Novozhilov, Y. K.—74, 79
Nuñes de Arenas, M.— 154

O

Obermann, K.—145-147, 305, 390, 452
Oborski, L.—551
O'Connor, F.—314, 320, 492-494
Odger, G.—549, 550, 552, 556, 592
Odoard —195
Ogarev, N. P.—271-274
Oizerman, T. I.—498, 632
Ortiz, L.—51, 53
Ossowski, S.—624
Owen, R.—247-257, 264-267, 280, 282, 284-286, 288, 312, 346, 347, 364, 365
Owen, R. D.—252, 253, 280, 325
Ozolin, A. I.—51

P

Palmerston —535, 550
Pankhurst, R. K. P.—285
Pankratova, A. M.—100, 207
Paulinyi, A.—157
Pavlov, V. I.—170
Peacock, Th.—43
Peel, R.—316, 415
Perdiguier, A.—221, 422-423
Perrachon —550, 552
Perrot — 439, 440
Pestel, P.—271
Petöfi, S.—279
Pfänder, K.—385, 551. 559, 560
Pinchbeck, I.—183
Pitchler, A.—486
Pi-y-Margall—539
Plekhanov, G. V.—257, 631-633
Pokhilevich, D. L.—73
Porshnev, B. F.—484
Postgate, R. W.—565
Potemkin, F. V.—90, 128, 143, 193, 211-213, 293, 406
Potter, G.—546, 580, 581
Pozdnyakov, I. G.—166
Prittwitz, K.—458
Proudhon —272, 290, 356-359, 388, 393, 425-427, 438, 443, 448, 538-540, 573, 604, 625, 626
Pujol, L.—435
Pugachev, Y. I.—13, 97-100
Purš, J.—120, 156
Pyatnitsky, A. N.—206

R

Radandt, H.—204, 219, 231
Radcliff, W.—178
Radetzky —491
Ramsay, G. D.—83
Ramsey, P.—81
Ránki, C.—158
Rashin, A. G.—162
Raspail —423, 425, 438
Rauschning, H.—620
Razin, S. T.—96, 97
Recurt —439
Redford, A.—139
Reesley, C.—89
Reinhard, M.—126, 151
Renan, E.—441
Renard, G.—409
Renner, K.—629
Revunenko, V. G.—624
Reynolds, T.—88

Ridley, R.—318
Ricardo —246, 358, 364, 443, 521
Riley, W. H.—581
Rioux, J.-P.—183, 185
Ripley, G.—280-281
Ritter, G.—620
Robespierre —336
Rodbertus-Jagetzow —619
Rodrigues, O.—261
Röser, P. G.—504-507
Rouff, M.—113
Rousseau, J.—240, 242, 283, 620
Roustel —201
Roux, J.—115
Rozhkova, M. K.—127, 162, 165, 176, 187, 205
Rude, F.—619
Rude, G.—113, 114
Rudnitskaya, E. L.—273
Ruge, A.—367, 368
Rühl, J.—551
Rumyantseva, N. S.—560
Rutenburg, V. I.—95
Rutman, P. E.—161
Ryabov, F. G.—611

S

Saint-Just —336
Saint-Simon, C.-H.—257-263, 265-267, 271, 281, 282, 284, 285, 287, 288, 290, 338, 346, 347, 364, 365
Sand, G.—268
Savari —422
Say, J. B.—623
Schafer, J.—150
Schak —630
Schapper, K.—306-308, 385, 386, 465, 499, 501, 505, 509, 664
Schieder, W.—622
Schily, V.—570
Schleiden —364
Schlesinger, R.—630
Schmidt, W.—394
Schmoller, G.—621
Schopenhauer —620
Schröter, A.—146
Schumpeter, J.—622
Schuster, Th.—305
Schwann —364
Schweitzer, J. B.—568, 635
Sénard —440, 441, 448
Serno-Solovyevich, A. A.—279, 574, 575
Serno-Solovyevich, N. A.—279
Serraillier, A.—556
Shaposhnikova, L.—169, 171
Shaw, R.—549, 556, 564
Shchukin, M.—206
Shelgunov, N. V.—573
Shelley, P. B.—245
Sibert, A.—431
Siebel, C.—568
Sinelnikova, I. M.—551
Sismondi —290
Skidmore, Th.—279, 325, 326
Smelser, N. J.—181
Smirin, M. N.—95, 102
Smirnova, V. A.—553
Smith, Adam —73, 79, 364
Smith, A. E.—50
Sobrier —420, 423, 424
Soboul, A.—115, 116, 624
Sorel, J.—632, 633
Sorge, F. A.—284, 532, 559, 560
Sombart, W.—622, 630
Southey, C. A. B.—182
Spence, Th.—243
Spencer, H.—624
Spengler —620
Speyer, C.—551
Spillman —60
Stallwood —318
Stammler, R.—621
Starkey, Th.—53
Stearns, P. N.—144
Stein, L. von —287, 619
Stern, D.—440
Sternberg —629
Steward, I.—565
Stojanovic Z.—55
Strauss, R.—146
Stumpf, P.—532, 571
Sturge, J.—316, 446
Sue, E.—268
Suslov, M. A.—623
Swift, L.—281
Sylvis, W. H.—565

T

Tame, J.—43
Tarle, E. V.— 177, 201, 202, 213, 296
Tate, G.—198, 200, 215, 237, 246, 311, 312
Taylor, A.—318
Taylor, E.—194
Teñon de Lara, M.—154
Tesedík, S.—51
Thierry—364
Thiers —364, 408, 438

Thomas, E.—415
Thomas, M. W.—183
Thomis, M. I.—193
Thompson, E. P.—183, 193, 197, 216, 232, 233, 246, 247
Thompson, W.—253, 255, 288
Thun —489
Timofeev, T. T.—632
Timpanaro, S.—633
Tobolka, Z.—157
Todt, E.—204, 219, 231
Tolain, H.-L.—545, 550, 552, 570, 571
Toynbee, A.—621
Trélat—433
Trevellick, R. F.—565
Tristan, F.—221, 268, 285
Trupp, G.—580
Trusov, A.—577
Tsypin, B. L.—125, 160, 163, 165
Turner, H. A.—200, 233
Turner, F.—149

U

Udaltsov, I. I.—51
Uhen, L.—193, 196, 223
Ushakov, I. F.—99
Utin, N. I.— 577

V

Vaillant, E.—556
Valles, J.—599
Van Col, H.—615
Varlin, L.-E.—570, 598, 599
Vasyutinsky, V. A.—196
Vaucanson —90
Veblen, Th.—621
Venedy, J.—305
Verri, P.—51
Villermé, M.—176, 177
Vinçard, P.—429-431
Vincent, H.—303
Vogt, A.—572, 573
Volgin, V. P.—240, 244, 245, 259, 271, 272, 288
Volodin, A. I.—271, 278
Voltaire —241, 246
Vygodsky, V. S.—554

W

Wakefield, E. G.—622
Waldeck, Franz von—95
Ware, N.—139
Warner, W. L.—625
Warnke, H.—231
Watt, J.—120, 180
Watteau —336
Webb, B.—227, 228, 233, 622
Webb, R.—75
Webb, S.—227, 228, 233, 622
Weber, M.—624
Weerth, G.—247, 385, 465
Weitling, W.—305-307, 336, 338-346, 379, 385, 386, 389, 393, 658
West, J.—318, 349
Weston, J.—552
Weydemeyer, J.—509, 510, 531, 532, 573
Wheeler, T.—318
White, G.—318, 349
Wilensky, H.—624, 625
Williams —318
Williams, G. A.—112
Willich, A.—455, 499, 501, 505, 664
Windischgrätz, A. von — 486, 489
Winstanley, G.—107, 241, 281
Wolf, L.—551-553
Wolfe, B. D.—630, 631
Wolff, W.—385, 386, 392, 465, 466
Wollstonecraft, M.—245
Wright, F.—280, 325
Wroblewski, W.—556
Wrong, D. H.—624

Z

Zabicki, A.—551
Zakher, Y. M.—112, 113, 116
Zastenker, N. E.—409, 411, 420, 422
Zilberfarb, I. I.—274
Zorina, A. M.—172, 208
Zwanziger —308-310

Y

Yatsunsky, V. K.—158, 161, 162, 164, 176, 187, 205
Yefimov, A. V.—147, 149, 151, 624
Yerofeyev, N. A.—128, 152, 181, 182, 292, 314

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
AT THE PRINTER'S

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MOVEMENT
(in seven volumes). Volume 2.
Edited by B. N. Ponomarev

Volume 2 covers the period from the Paris Commune to the first Russian revolution. It examines the conversion of the proletariat into the leader of social development, offers a comparative study of the labour movement in different regions and shows the growing influence of Marxism, the emergence and growth of socialist parties, trade unions, and other workers' organisations. Much space is devoted to the struggles of the proletariat in Russia, to the creative development of Marxism by Lenin, and the founding of the Bolshevik Party, which rang in a new phase of the world revolutionary process.

The publication addresses itself to scholars and a wider range of readers interested in the problems of the international labour movement.

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
AT THE PRINTER'S

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MOVEMENT (in seven volumes). Volume 3.
Edited by B. N. Ponomarev

Volume 3 deals with the international labour movement during the period preceding the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism ushered in by the Great October Socialist Revolution. The topic is treated on a historical plane, showing the negative as well as positive experiences, and the common features and specificities of the workers' struggle in various regions and countries. An analysis is given of the theoretical and practical activity of Lenin, the Bolsheviks and other revolutionary forces of the international labour movement, and of their struggle against opportunists. Much space is devoted to the Russian revolutions of 1905-1907 and February 1917, which paved the way for the victory of the October Revolution.

The publication addresses itself to scholars and a wider range of readers interested in the problems of the international labour movement.

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
ON SALE

Boris Ponomarev, **LENIN AND THE WORLD REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS**

This is a collection of articles and speeches by B. N. Ponomarev, Secretary of the CC CPSU, Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and a prominent figure of the world communist movement. Problems of the world revolutionary process are examined by the author in the light of Lenin's ideas.

Ponomarev's articles sum up the historical experience of the CPSU, and the emergence and consolidation of the socialist world community. The book describes the struggle for the triumph of the principles of proletarian internationalism in the international working-class movement, and shows the benign reciprocal influence of the modern revolutionary process and the struggle for peace.

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
ON SALE

Andrei Gromyko, **LENIN AND THE SOVIET PEACE POLICY**

This is a collection of speeches and articles of A. A. Gromyko, Member of the CC CPSU Politbureau and USSR Foreign Minister, covering the period 1945 to 1980, and showing how the Leninist foreign policy of peace is being carried forward by the Soviet Government. A clear view is given of the progress achieved in fulfilling the Peace Programme adopted by the 24th and further projected in the resolutions of the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

A political biography of A. A. Gromyko is attached, and name and subject indices are provided.

REQUEST TO READERS

Progress Publishers would be glad to have your opinion of this book, its translation and design and any suggestions you may have for future publications.

Please send all your comments to 17, Zubovsky Boulevard, Moscow, USSR.